U.S. NAVAL STRATEGY IN THE PACIFIC

By

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Declaration

Except where otherwise indicated

this thesis is my own work.

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Dedication

For Penny, without whose love and support this could not have been accomplished.

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CHAPTER 1
Introduction

Political, economic, and military rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union has increased in scope in the recent years, with both superpowers paying closer attention to the Pacific Ocean region. The United States has traditionally been a Pacific nation, with extensive territorial and commercial interests extending beyond its Western seaboard; despite having possessed a Pacific coast for some time, the Soviet Union has become an important actor in the region only recently. Both nations have manifested their increased interest in the Pacific by expansions of their strategic military concerns in the region. In the case of the United States, the value of its economic and political ties in the region is reflected by the place accorded in U.S. military strategy to defending allies and protecting U.S. interests in the Pacific. In the 1980s, U.S. strategy has undergone some changes; most visibly, U.S. naval strategy has gained more prominence within overall military strategy. At the same time, it has seemed that naval strategy has accorded additional importance to the Pacific region.

This thesis will consider the naval strategy of the United States and its effects in the Pacific. Because of the fact that the U.S. has long defined the Soviet Union as its major antagonist in world affairs, Soviet interests, naval strategy, and forces in the Far East have important implications for the development of U.S. strategy. Chapter Two examines changes that have taken place in Soviet military strategy over the past ten years, and the place that the Soviet Navy has within overall military strategy. The missions of the Soviet Navy are considered in the context of changes which have occurred in Soviet military strategy. There has been an increase in the level and quality of Soviet naval forces in the Pacific in recent years; the relationship between this development and Soviet strategy in the region will be discussed.

Soviet naval expansion in the Pacific is one factor which has appeared to drive the U.S. military buildup in this decade; apparently, a redefinition of the scope of U.S. military strategy, and particularly naval strategy, has been another factor. Chapter Three considers the extent of changes to U.S. military strategy that have taken place since the advent of the Reagan Administration in 1981. In this decade, the strategy of the U.S. Navy has been in the limelight, as a new declaratory strategy has been

developed. The nature of changes to the Navy's strategy will be analyzed, and the implications of the new Maritime Strategy for U.S. concerns in the Pacific will be discussed. Finally, this chapter examines U.S. interests and forces in the Pacific, in light of the effects of the Maritime Strategy.

The Maritime Strategy has been very controversial; several facets have drawn criticism, particularly those which emphasize operations in the Pacific. Chapter Four considers a series of criticisms which have been levelled at the Maritime Strategy, in an effort to determine the validity of the criticisms, and to arrive at some conclusions regarding the usefulness of the Maritime Strategy for achieving the goals set by overall U.S. military strategy.

Both superpowers have stressed the strategic importance of the Pacific in recent years; the United States has been particularly concerned, in the 1980s, to adjust its military strategy to better cope with challenges to U.S. interests in the Pacific. The major perceived threat is the Soviet Union; U.S. military strategy since the late 1940s has placed the need to preserve deterrence of the Soviet Union at the top of its list of priorities, both in terms of global deterrence and regional deterrence. U.S. naval strategy, as a component of military strategy, is defined with this same priority in mind. The Maritime Strategy which has been enunciated seeks to provide a framework by which the Navy can contribute to U.S. national objectives including deterrence, protection of allies, and protection of U.S. interests; the concern expressed in the Navy's strategy for operations in the Pacific reflects the increased importance of this region for the United States. U.S. naval strategy in the Pacific has been designed to enhance deterence of the Soviet Union and provide the outline for protecting U.S. interests in the region. This thesis attempts to determine whether the Maritime Strategy can indeed achieve the goals set for it.

CHAPTER 2

Soviet Naval Strategy and Developments in the Pacific

2.1 Introduction

Among the most important factors in the development of military strategy is the perception of the strategy and capabilities which are held by an enemy, and the assessment of the best means to counter the enemy's strategy and forces. In the period since World War II, the United States has perceived the Soviet Union as the primary threat to its national security and to American interests worldwide; today, "the Soviet Union remains the major military threat to the United States and its interests. They persist in an unrelenting arms buildup that has continued for more than 20 years."[1] Consequently, Soviet military strategy and military capabilities are central considerations in the development of U.S. military strategy and the means for its execution. The perceptions of the Soviet threat on the part of members of the U.S. military establishment determine the countervailing strategy that will be developed.

Among recent changes in the nature of the Soviet threat, improvements and additions to Soviet naval forces have caused particular concern to American officials. The growth of Soviet naval power has been cited as "one of the most dramatic developments of the post-World War II period...."[2] Former U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral James D. Watkins, has written that "...the need for a sound strategy has grown all the more important as the Soviets developed a formidable blue-water Navy able to challenge U.S. interests worldwide."[3] One of the primary factors that has caused the U.S. Navy to review its strategy is the broadened scope of Soviet activity outside of Europe, which includes their "...extensive maritime operations, especially from facilities at Cam Ranh, Vietnam; and the general buildup of air and naval forces in the Pacific."[4]

This chapter considers the place of the Soviet navy within overall Soviet military strategy, with attention to recent changes in both the overall strategy and its naval component. The particular missions of the Soviet navy will be considered, again with reference to shifts in doctrine. Finally, the specific developments of the Soviet Navy in the Pacific will be discussed, in an attempt to identify the Soviet naval missions and capabilities in this region, and to determine possible changes in missions that have been brought about by strategic innovations and improvements in capabilities.

2.2 Soviet Naval Strategy

2.2.1 The Context: Soviet Military Strategy

The determination of the objectives and key tenets of overall Soviet military strategy is based upon the analysis of Soviet military writings on strategy as well as upon the statements and writings of key civilian political officials, particularly the General Secretaries of the Communist Party. Such analyses have been undertaken by both civilian and military experts in the United States; most American observers "...agree on a broad range of noncontroversial objectives and supporting policies that correlate closely with visible Soviet force posture."[5] This discussion of Soviet military strategy will deal with the elements that are most commonly and widely asserted to be included in that strategy.

2.2.1.1 The Elements of Soviet Strategy

The military strategy of the USSR is designed to provide a framework for the achievement of national goals by the employment of military power. The development of military doctrine and strategy are closely tied to the foreign policy goals which the USSR pursues, in accordance with the notion that military power should be subordinate to political objectives. Three broad aims of Soviet foreign policy can be distinguished:

> ...the avoidance of general nuclear war, which, once begun, would be uncontrollable in its course and cataclysmic in its consequences....a determination to ensure the safety of Russian territory and that of the Eastern European states which are considered as essential to Russia's own security....[and] her third external aim of enlarging her national and ideological influence at the expense of her two main rivals, the United States and China.[6]

However, should the USSR become involved in a war, both their nuclear and conventional declaratory doctrines stress that "victory" is the ultimate objective.[7] The use or threatened use of military power is also considered important in peacetime contingencies, again as a means of securing political objectives. Soviet strategy, "both in peacetime political competition and in the ultimate test of a central conflict, [tends] to see all force elements as contributing to a unified strategic purpose, national survival and the elimination or containment of enemies on the periphery."[8] Deterrence and achievement of policy objectives, and the ability to be victorious in a war if it should occur, appear to be the central goals of Soviet strategy.

The means for the implementation of the strategy, as implied above, are the total military forces available to the USSR. Soviet strategy distinguishes roles for strategic nuclear weapons, tactical nuclear weapons, and conventional forces. Military writings suggest that the USSR considers that "...a future war with the West will be global in scope, violent, and decisive."[9] From this deduction follow a number of implications for

the various elements of the Soviet armed forces, and their missions in the case of a war; however, the conclusion that a war with the West would be global and violent does not necessarily imply that it need be a nuclear war. American officials feel that "even in such a war the Soviets would not use nuclear weapons lightly, preferring to achieve their goals with conventional means."[10] Soviet military doctrine concerning escalation to nuclear weapons is ambiguous: though nuclear weapons are seen as a means of complementing conventional weapons to achieve a swift victory, there is also evidence which indicates that the USSR acknowledges, at least to some extent, the danger of escalation, and consequently would be prepared to withhold nuclear missiles as a retaliatory threat to prevent the U.S. from 'going nuclear.'[11]

Especially in the past ten years, Soviet political and military leaders have appeared to reconsider and redefine some elements of the military strategy in an attempt to develop a more flexible spectrum of response options for warfighting. The main forces available to the Soviet leaders remain the same, but there seem to be more emphases upon the possibility of limited conflicts than in earlier periods. The following sections consider more specifically the Soviet doctrines for the use of strategic nuclear weapons, tactical nuclear weapons, and conventional forces.

2.2.1.2 Soviet Nuclear Warfighting Strategy

The basic contention of Soviet nuclear weapons strategy is that victory could and should be sought in the event of a general nuclear war, but at the same time there is a recognition of the potential devastation that a nuclear war could cause and an acceptance of the existence of mutual deterrence. The doctrine for the use of strategic nuclear weapons in the event of a war has been broadly defined in the USSR for the past twenty years. In the early 1960s, General Secretary Khrushchev and others argued that nuclear war was unthinkable, because of the threat of world destruction, and had generally come to accept "...the theses on the non-inevitability, non-necessity, and non-expediency of nuclear war...."[12] However, orthodox military strategists continued to consider the possibility that nuclear war might occur and to develop doctrines for use in fighting, and avowedly winning such a war. In 1968, Marshal V.D. Sokolovskij, a former Chief of the General Staff, reflected this warfighting strategy in his book, *Soviet Military Strategy*:

> under conditions of nuclear rocket war the resolution of the main aims and problems of war will be accomplished by strategic rocket troops by delivery of massed nuclear rocket strikes. Ground troops, with the aid of aviation will perform important strategic functions in modern war: by rapid offensive movement they will completely annihilate the remaining enemy formations, occupy enemy territory and prevent the enemy from invading one's own territory.[13]

This clearly indicates that general nuclear war, though potentially catastrophic, is a contingency for which Soviet military planners have attempted to devise a strategy.

Analysts agree that this emphasis on being able to fight and win a nuclear war, if it comes, remains a central tenet of Soviet nuclear doctrine; but there is also widespread agreement that the emphasis has shifted away from strictly strategic nuclear options towards selective employment of tactical nuclear weapons, with even some suggestion that the Soviet Union contemplates the possibility of a full-scale, all-conventional war with the West. Soviet declaratory doctrine for strategic nuclear weapons "...continues to be predicated upon the assumption that if a general nuclear war should occur, all elements of the armed forces would contribute to waging a decisive struggle aimed at defeating world imperialism."[14] However, though victory is still the strategic goal, the Soviet Union lacks the capabilities to achieve it.[15] By adopting a warfighting posture, the Soviets seek to provide the most credible deterrent to the actual occurence of a nuclear war, while maintaining a contingent resort if deterrence should fail.[16] Both force developments and declaratory policy indicate that the USSR has decreased its emphasis upon the strategic nuclear deterrent and has moved towards acquiring more balanced and capable military forces.

2.2.1.3 Tactical Nuclear Weapons

The emphasis in Soviet declaratory doctrine regarding tactical nuclear weapons is upon their utility for achieving victory in a war. Soviet doctrine has accepted that a clear dividing line exists between strategic and theatre nuclear weapons; however, the division between conventional war and theatre nuclear war is less distinct,[17] which conceivably enhances the chance that tactical nuclear weapons would be used to support conventional forces in the event of a war. Should deterrence fail, Soviet strategy prescribes offensive operations to secure the initiative and to more effectively achieve their goals; "theater nuclear and chemical capabilities, fully integrated into doctrine, stand ready to reinforce conventional activities."[18] The date that is generally agreed upon for the beginning of Soviet attention to tactical nuclear weapons strategy is the mid-1970s; about that time, the USSR actively began planning for limited nuclear conflicts, and Soviet literature suggested that its military planners had embraced the notion that nuclear war could be fought without issuing in attacks upon the superpowers' homelands.[19] By 1977, the Soviet Union had made the distiction between nuclear war involving homelands and that involving other areas more clear, and had added the notion that, "...given the profusion of nuclear-capable systems at sea, and the nuclear thrust of US naval expansion, nuclear war at sea might not be avoidable."[20] The issue of nuclear war at sea will be considered in a subsequent section which focuses upon the missions of the Navy in the framework of Soviet strategy. It is clear that Soviet military strategy, while accepting the division between conventional and nuclear forces, places a great value upon the contingent

employment of tactical nuclear weapons as a means of achieving victory in a limited conflict.

2.2.1.4 Conventional War

In the past ten years, a shift in declaratory doctrine has occurred that has given more prominence to conventional military options than in the decade preceeding 1977. In that year, General Secretary Brezhnev gave a major foreign policy address in the Soviet city of Tula, in which he endorsed a change in previous doctrine regarding nuclear weapons. Brezhnev

> ...declared that the Soviet Union rejected strategic superiority and merely sought to be the military "equal" of the United States. More notably, he reversed two of the more enshrined axioms of Soviet military doctrine by disavowing any Soviet planning for preemption and claiming that no one could count on emerging from nuclear war the winner.[21]

Though it has been argued that this 'shift' in doctrine merely represents a change in emphasis within a fairly continous strategy,[22] the effect of the 'Tula line' has been to downgrade all nuclear options and to enhance conventional options for warfighting.[23]

The effort to match Western (especially U.S.) power in all fields of military competition has become one of the central tenets of Soviet military development. Writing one year after the enunciation of the 'Tula line,' Soviet historian Nicolai Nikol'skij, of the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, stressed that nuclear war was self-negating, and that the 'imperialist powers' had worked out an elaborate strategy for waging conventional war, thus making it "...necessary also to oppose to the imperialist powers a corresponding power on the part of peaceloving forces...."[24] By 1982, Soviet military writings indicated that the basic option for warfare (though not the only one) had become the conventional one, and that the major threat to the Soviet Union was a 'general conventional war' encompasing not only Europe but other theatres as well.[25] Military figures as prominent as Marshal N.V. Ogarkov were asserting the possibilty not only of all-conventional war, but also of protracted conflict, even 'extending over many years.'[26] American officials have acknowledged this shift in Soviet declaratory doctrine, yet also recognize that nuclear options have not been excluded from Soviet planning, by any means: the official perception is that "the Soviets believe that a world war could be waged for a period of time with conventional weapons only....the Soviets believe that it is possible that a conventional war will escalate to a nuclear conflict."[27] There has been a shift in Soviet strategy towards upgrading the conventional forces, to more flexibly pursue military and political objectives and to more equally balance the forces of the 'imperialist' West.

The goals of Soviet conventional forces strategy echo those of overall military

strategy, and also include specific roles for conventional forces in peacetime. The primary objectives are deterrence and defense against conventional attacks on the Soviet homeland, and, in the event of a conflict with the U.S., "Soviet leaders seek nothing less than a military victory...."[28] To accomplish deterrence and warfighting goals, the means sought are forces sufficient to win a continental conflict as well as naval forces to control home waters and protect ballistic missile submarine bastions.[29] Besides these roles, conventional military forces are given the peacetime missions to maintain "...an authoritative presence in buffer states...help expand Soviet influence abroad; and discourage any...venture against Soviet interests."[30] The varied roles defined for the military have enhanced the place of naval forces in Soviet strategy: as the missions of the military have expanded in both peacetime deterrence and warfighting contingencies, the Soviet Navy has expanded to better be able to fulfil some of these missions.

2.2.2 The Navy in Soviet Strategy

The missions of Soviet naval forces stem from the overall strategy of the Soviet Union. Particularly important in the development of the Soviet Navy and in the codification of its missions have been the strategic ideas of Admiral Sergei Gorshkov, Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy from 1956 until 1985, whose writings stress the "...increasing importance of naval forces as an instrument of state policy in peacetime and as a means of influencing the course and outcome of wars of all kinds."[31] Based on Soviet writings and pronouncements, as well as other evidence, there is a general agreement among analysts in the West as to the missions of the Soviet Navy.[32] The principle tasks of the Soviet Navy are strategic strikes, sea control, strategic defense and destruction of enemy naval forces, interdiction of sea lines of communication, power projection, and naval diplomacy/support of state policy.

2.2.2.1 Strategic Strikes

It is widely agreed that the primary mission of the Soviet Navy is the execution of strategic strikes against land targets. Beginning in the mid 1960s, Soviet decisionmakers accorded this task to the Navy in an effort to increase the survivability of their nuclear weapon force and to ensure Soviet strategic might. The decision was accompanied by the development of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and the deployment of "...an array of surface vessels designed to provide a protective anti-submarine warfare screen."[33] Subsequently, the strategic strike mission was refined, by adding SSBNs capable of delivering nuclear weapons against targets in the United States while stationed in Soviet home waters. Thus to the need for support forces was added the need for secure ocean bastions, defensible from attacks.[34] Currently, Soviet *Delta* and *Typhoon* class SSBNs are capable of reaching the U.S. with their submarine-launched ballistic missiles

(SLBMs) from bastions in the Barents Sea and in the Sea of Okhotsk; these two classes account for just over half the total Soviet ballistic missile submarine fleet, but carry over 60% of all Soviet SLBMs and over 85% of SLBM warheads.[35] The remaining SSBNs, together with non-nuclear ballistic missile-firing submarines, are capable of shorter range strikes, either against the Eurasian landmass from Soviet home waters or against North America from forward-deployed stations.[36]

The SSBN fleet is regarded as "the Soviet Navy's primary threat to the United States...."[37] However, the weight assigned to strategic strikes among all the missions of the Soviet Navy seems to have declined in recent years, concurrent with the shifting focus in overall Soviet strategy. It is clear that Soviet SSBNs are an important part of the Soviet strategic reserve, in line with a strategy of witholding SLBMs for purposes of retaliation and war termination leverage,[38] but the role of the submarines has diminished in importance because of the reemerging emphasis on conventional operations and because other elements of the Soviet triad are now considered to be less vulnerable than previously thought. A new naval doctrine focusing on 'sustainability' has emerged, and scenarios based on first-salvo nuclear engagement have been "...replaced by others which put a premium on conventional options."[39] In 1984, SLBMs carried a smaller percentage of total Soviet strategic nuclear warheads than they had ten years earlier (22.9%, compared with 26.7% in 1975).[40] Two factors accounted for this: first, a more optimistic perception of the survivability of land-based ICBMs and the increased deployment of strategic bombers, including those armed with air-launched cruise missiles.

According to one analyst,

> by the 1970s, Soviet strategists had become far more sanguine than their American counterparts about the ability of their ICBMs to survive new missile accuracies (a decade later, three quarters of their strategic arsenal remained land-based, as opposed to less than one quarter of America's)....The Soviets also believed that improved silo hardening techniques would permit a significant proportion of land-based missiles to survive attack, and be available for response.[41]

Likewise, the extreme weakness of U.S. air defenses and the declared intention of the Reagan Administration to deploy ballistic missile defenses have made the deployment of strategic bombers more attractive; in 1984, such forces totalled 11% of total Soviet strategic weapons, compared with only 5.8% in 1975.[42] Changes in Soviet doctrine, combined with perceptions that other elements of the Soviet triad are incresingly capable of being made survivable, have resulted in some decrease in the emphasis upon the strategic strike mission of the Soviet Navy, though strategic strike seems to remain the Navy's primary mission.

2.2.2.2 Defensive Missions of the Soviet Navy

Though the distinction between the concepts of 'offensive' and 'defensive' in weapons, force missions and doctrine is extremely controversial and often difficult to make, it is possible to differentiate among the other missions of the Soviet Navy certain ones which are primarily defensive in nature. These are sea control, strategic defense, and destruction of enemy naval forces. Primarily offensive missions, the interdiction of sea lines of communication and power projection ashore, will be considered later. The three defensive missions often encompass complementary objectives in their execution.

The mission of sea control is designed to assure Soviet ability to operate their own forces within a given area, usually the waters immediately adjacent to the homeland. Their main purpose is to protect their SSBN forces and to deny the use of the area of the strategic bastion to enemy forces (this aspect of the strategy is sometimes called 'sea denial' or 'area defense'). In the writings of Admiral Gorshkov, sea control is cited as a means by which the Navy can conduct operations which can be "...decisive for the outcome of the war,"[43] and therefore is accorded high priority among the missions of the naval forces. The means for accomplishing control of the seas are essentially those that would entail the prosecution of strategic defense and the destruction of the enemy, namely, attacks against (in the case of a war with the United States and its allies) SSBNs, strike carriers, and other surface and subsurface naval elements.

For the mission of strategic defense, the central goal would be "...the destruction of those enemy forces that pose a nuclear threat to the Soviet Union...."[44] The USSR could be expected, in the case of a general war, to use all of the forces at its disposal to accomplish this mission. This includes cruise-missile armed submarines, torpedo attack submarines, anti-submarine warfare (ASW) ships and aircraft, and by ship-to-ship missiles and cruise missiles from surface ships. Naturally, these same forces would be employed in the destruction of enemy forces more generally, in the defense against any maritime attack. The ability of the Soviet Navy to carry out its strategic defense mission is questionable, however. Despite having spent considerable resources on the development of effective ASW forces,[45] the USSR has found it difficult to track U.S. SSBNs. Because of this, and the considerable ASW capacity of the U.S. and its allies, the U.S. SSBN fleet is "...currently believed invulnerable by U.S. (and probably Soviet) analysts."[46]

However, improvements in Soviet surface ships, as well as extensive deployment of cruise missiles and more capable nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) have enhanced the Soviet ability to attack and conceivably destroy strike carriers and other enemy naval forces. Notable among these improvements are the deployment of *Kirov* battle cruisers, *Udaloy* and *Sovremennyy* class destroyers, and *Alfa* SSNs, all fitted with nuclear-tipped anti-ship and/or anti-submarine missiles, as well as conventionally armed

cruise missiles and torpedoes.[47] These tactical nulcear weapons clearly provide a means of destroying an enemy navy, and raise the question of the Soviet doctrine for the use of nuclear weapons at sea.

2.2.2.3 Naval Tactical Nuclear Weapons

For a Navy which has for years been thought less capable than its U.S. counterpart, the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons at sea provides a means for narrowing the gap in capabilities. For purposes of destroying enemy vessels, in a situation where multiple hits with conventional weapons might be required to sink an aircraft carrier or other ship, "...a single nuclear weapon, of even small size, would suffice."[48] Thus for the missions of strategic defense and destruction of enemy forces, as well as for the more offensive missions of sea-lane interdiction and power projection ashore, tactical 'nukes' provide a possible short-cut to success; their utility for carrying out defensive missions is evident, despite their tactically offensive nature. The increasingly large inventory of Soviet naval tactical nuclear weapons indicates "...a continuing need to compensate for U.S. conventional superiority at sea."[49]

Whether the Soviets would employ naval tactical nuclear weapons in a conflict, or at what stage, has been a matter of much uncertainty. Admiral Gorshkov, in *The Seapower of the State*, writes that "a special feature of the sea battle is that it has nearly always been waged to destroy the enemy. The equipping of the forces of the fleet with nuclear weapons is further accentuating this feature."[50] Analyses of Soviet military literature indicate that Soviet leaders have fewer inhibitions about the use of nuclear weapons than their American couterparts;[51] besides, "Soviet strategic and theatre nuclear doctrines emphasize surprise offensive action as the best defense."[52] It is unlikely that naval tactical nuclear strategy deviates much from other aspects of their nuclear strategy. For these reasons, and because of Soviet naval inferiority relative to the U.S., analysts have concluded that "...the Soviet navy must be expected to resort to the use of nuclear weapons at a fairly early stage of any major engagement at sea ... particularly if it is believed that the use of nuclear weapons could be confined to the sea."[53]

However, there are a number of factors which suggest that the use of naval tactical nuclear weapons might not eventuate at an early stage in a conflict, or that it might not occur at all. First of all, is seems unlikely that nuclear weapons would be used at sea independently of their use on land. An avowed purpose of the Soviet Navy is to support land forces; "any naval tac nuke operation thus would likely complement strife ashore."[54] Also, despite U.S. perceptions that "the Soviets are willing and able to use nulear and chemical weapons to insure sucess,"[55] there is also a recognition of the changes in declaratory doctrine and operational force deployment which signal Soviet moves towards

enhanced conventional operations. In this decade, Soviet strategists have been "...addressing the possibility that a conventional conflict with the West could last for months....Soviet combat forces (including the Navy) are being configured to fight extended conventional conflicts...;"[56]

Finally, the argument that Soviet naval inferiority makes a first-use of naval tactical nuclear weapons likely appears to have lost some of its force in the past five years, following rapid (and continuing) deployments of Soviet vessels capable of effective conventional action. One analyst has cited a 1979 study which declares that "the dominant characteristics of many Soviet surface combatant ships...all suggest that their employment in a long drawn-out conventional war was not forseen as a major mission when they were built."[57] However, many of the characteristics of vessels deployed since 1980 suggest that they were built with the possibility of fighting a conventional war in mind.

Soviet submarine forces are capable of carrying out conventional torpedo or cruise missile attacks against surface vessels (though in a conflict with the U.S. they would have a strong ASW force to contend with), and "the recent Soviet rate of development of new submarines and submarine related systems is remarkable, with seven new combat types and two research submarines being built since 1980...."[58] The Soviet Navy has some 63 submarines capable of firing cruise missiles, together with between 200 and 214 attack submarines; the total of around 270 submarines is about three times as many as the U.S. deploys.[59] It is widely perceived that "compensatory U.S. quality is less notable annually, because [the Soviets] are replacing antiquated classes with sophisticated technology at a more rapid rate."[60] Among the submarines deployed primarily in this decade, the *Oscar* class, of which 3 vessels have been deployed, boasts the ability to launch 24 SS-NX-19 anti-ship cruise missiles and a double-hull construction to withstand conventional torpedoes.[61] In 1984, the USSR deployed two new classes of SSN, *Mike* and *Sierra*, of which thus far only one example each exists, but which could provide increased capabilities should more be deployed; both of these submarines carry SS-NX-21 cruise missiles, with a range of 1600 nautical miles.[62] Both the SS-NX-19 and the SS-NX-21 can carry either conventional or nuclear warheads. There have been 20 *Victor III* SSNs deployed since 1979, along with 11 *Kilo* class SSs. Both classes have 8 torpedo tubes; though information is not readily available regarding the armaments of these submarines, it seems plausible that they carry both conventional and nuclear weapons, in line with the tendency of Soviet naval vessels towards dual-capability. The more modern SSNs and SSs, together with older Soviet submarines, "are difficult to detect when running on batteries, and thus would be formidable for barrier operations in straits and other restricted waters."[63]

Also since 1980, a third *Kiev* class aircraft carrier, 2 nuclear-powered *Kirov* battle cruisers, 1 *Slava* cruiser, 6 *Sovremennyy* and 7 *Udaloy* class destroyers have been deployed.[64] While not a large increase in numerical terms, these new deployments represent a significant qualitative improvement in Soviet surface combatants; most of the new ships are multipurpose, usually combining ASW and anti-surface warfare capabilities. These ships "...are larger, more heavily armed, and carry more munitions than predecessors. Those attributes better enable them to fight conventional wars."[65] Most of the Soviet surface vessels are dual-capable, carrying both nuclear and conventional weapons; there is difficulty in determining what the exact balance of weapons types is aboard Soviet vessels, beyond recognizing that many of their antiship and ASW missiles can carry either type of warhead. Nevertheless, there appears to be an effort in Soviet naval procurement to acquire surface ships and submarines capable of carrying out conventional battles. Based on the developments of the past ten years in particular, it has been argued that "the armament of Soviet ships, submarines and aircraft moreover, certainly shows that they could give a very good account of themselves without going nuclear."[66] The conclusions of the 1979 report regarding the conventional capabilities of the Soviet Navy seem to be less accurate in light of shifts in doctrine and deployments since the end of the past decade.

2.2.2.4 Offensive Missions

The expansion of Soviet naval capabilities has also embellished the usefulness of the fleet for carrying out more offensive operations such as interdiction of sea lines of communication (SLOCs) and power projection. The disruption of U.S. and allied SLOCs is a traditional mission assigned to the Soviet Navy. In the period in which Soviet doctrine assumed the rapid escalation of a conflict with the West into nuclear war, this mission diminished in priority, given that such a war would probably last for only a short time.[67] However, in recent years, the shifting focus of Soviet strategy towards a consideration of possibly protracted nuclear or conventional war has returned SLOC interdiction to a place of greater prominence. Even as long ago as 1968, SLOC interdiction had been given a high priority: Marshal Sokolovskij's *Soviet Military Strategy* states that it is among the 'primary' missions of the Soviet Navy.[68] Western analysts generally agree that this mission is about third in priority for the Soviet Navy; but in the event of a protracted war the anti-SLOC mission would be very attractive for two reasons. First, a protracted NATO-Warsaw Pact conflict would require the Western allies to receive large numbers of supplies from the United States; the destruction of a portion of this military shipping "...could be critical to the outcome of the fight to the finish which their doctrine envisages."[69] In the Pacific, SLOCs leading to Japan and

South Korea, which are important to those nations' economies, could be threatened in a conflict;[70] however, SLOCs do not appear to be as important to supporting a battle in the Pacific theatre as they are potentially in Europe, in part because the vast expanses of the Pacific at once make direct protection of SLOCs more difficult and the interdiction of the SLOCs less feasible.[71] Second, though not the highest priority mission, SLOC interdiction could assist some of the more important missions by "...tying down Western ASW forces and diverting them from posing a threat to the SSBN strategic reserve."[72] Soviet capability to conduct anti-SLOC missions has improved with the general upgrading of the fleet, and the U.S. Navy has concluded that this increase in Soviet maritime strength, partcularly in its submarine forces, poses a significant threat to Western sea lanes in the event of a conflict;[73] Whether the Soviet Union would pursue such a mission or not would depend upon circumstances; but in the event of a protracted war, this mission could contribute to securing victory.

The final major task of the Soviet Navy is the projection of power ashore. This is one of the lower-priority missions of the Soviet Navy, as indicated by the relatively small amount of resources allotted to it. Two main purposes for power projection capabilities can be identified: amphibious operations to secure strategic positions and the support of ground forces. The latter is perceived as the more important.[74] For the mission of amphibious warfare, the Soviets deploy only a small Naval Infantry, amounting to only about 16,000 active troops in 1984 (compared with 155,000 U.S. Marines).[75] This force has also suffered cutbacks in support ship procurement, with the postponement of construction of specialized assault ships after two *Ivan Rogov* class ships had been deployed in 1978 and 1983;[76] in addition, the Soviet Naval infantry lacks the type of tactical aircover that the U.S. amphibious forces can expect from carrier-based aircraft. For the support of ground forces, Soviet capabilities are somewhat greater, with more forces available for the tasks of "...protecting the army's seaward flanks from attacks by enemy naval and amphibious forces, and providing naval gunfire and logistics support to land operations."[77] However, the main objectives of force projection are likely to remain areas of strategic interest that are relatively close to the Soviet Union, mainly for reasons of insuring the presence of land-based aircover.[78] Presumably, these could include attempts to seize the Danish and Turkish Straits, Northern Norway, and the Japanese Straits, all of which could provide strategically useful positions in a conflict. The capability of the Soviet Navy to project forces outside of areas where it can provide aircover appears small.

2.2.2.5 The Soviet Navy in Peacetime

The main task of the Soviet Navy in peacetime is the support of state policy interests. These include protection of Soviet lives and property, extention of Soviet prestige, extention of Soviet influence, and countering the expansion of 'imperialist' influence.[79] In particular, Soviet military writings (especially those of Admiral Gorshkov) lay an emphasis upon the value of the visibility of ships as a demonstration of power and, if necessary, of resolve. Gorshkov has written that "demonstrative actions by the fleet in many cases have made it possible to achieve political ends without resorting to armed force....thus the fleet has always been an instrument of the policy of states, an important aid to diplomacy in peacetime."[80] Because of the possibility of world-wide deployment and mobility, naval forces are best suited to perform the task of 'showing the flag,' and the increase in the number of foreign port visits between 1965 (when the Navy visited 12 nations) and 1975 (when it visited 82 ports in 50 nations) serves to demonstrate the expansion of this Soviet naval mission.[81] In addition, the Soviets have followed what Michael MccGwire calls a 'policy of incrementalism' in expanding the role of the fleet in peacetime, exploring and exploiting opportunities to expand Soviet presence and influence.[82] Accordingly, the Soviets have not risked direct confrontation with U.S. forces, but have maintained naval presences and have sometimes used the Navy to provide support to allies and clients during conflicts. Soviet naval force support for the pursuit of policy objectives abroad, according to MccGwire, depends upon the "...scale and style of the Western reponse to the various Soviet initiatives."[83] The recent deployments of impressive, high-technology surface vessels augment the ability to demonstrate Soviet power through port visits and off-shore presence, and to show support for Soviet allies and clients while countering the presence of U.S. and allied navies.

2.3 The Soviet Navy in the Pacific

The Soviet Union has paid a great amount of attention to the interests of its eastern regions in recent years. In July, 1986, General Secretary Gorbachev detailed a policy for Soviet relations in the Pacific region, concentrating upon the desire of the Soviet Union for improving political and economic relations with regional nations, especially China and Japan.[84] Given in the Pacific port of Vladivostok, Gorbachev's speech reflected the increasing importance which the USSR places upon its position as an Asian and Pacific country, an importance which has also been signalled by a military build-up in the region. Soviet land, air, naval, and nuclear weapons forces have all increased in size and quality. In particular, the Soviet Navy and forces assigned to naval aviation have grown in the past decade. The subsequent discussion describes the expansion of Soviet naval power in the Pacific and examines the buildup in light of the missions of the Soviet Pacific Fleet.

2.3.0.1 Naval Deployments

The Soviet Pacific Fleet has been the fastest growing of the four Soviet fleets in the past ten years, with increases in the numbers of surface and subsurface combatants as well as improvements in their quality and in the quality of their support facilities. The fleet has doubled in size since 1965, and in the past ten years has received a greater proportion of ships than other Soviet fleets: in 1965, the Pacific fleet accounted for 25% of all naval forces, while containing 28% in 1975 and 32% in 1986.[85] The Pacific Fleet attracts a disproportionate share of the more modern Soviet vessels; two of the three *Kiev* aircraft carriers, one of two *Ivan Rogov* amphibious attack ships, and *Victor III* and *Kilo* class attack submarines are among the most recent aquisitions.[86] In November 1985, a task force consisting of the *Frunze*, the second *Kirov* class battle cruiser, and one ship each of the *Udaloy* and *Sovremennyy* destroyer classes was transferred to the Pacific Fleet from the Northern and Baltic Fleets.[87] The *Frunze* carries 20 SS-N-19 cruise missiles, two air defense systems, and a point defense system, which enhance its attack capabilities and its survivability in a conflict; the *Udaloy* class destroyer carries eight SS-N-14 anti-submarine missiles and a SA-N-8 anti-aircraft missile system, while the *Sovremennyy* class destroyer features eight SS-N-22 antiship missiles and SA-N-7 surface-to-air missiles, along with twin 130-millimetre guns.[88] In addition, bases in the Soviet Far East are home to about 40 Naval Aviation *Backfire* bombers, armed with standoff missiles and capable of covering sea lanes as far as the Philippines, Guam, and Midway without refueling.[89] These forces represent the state-of-the-art in the Soviet arsenal, and give the Soviet Union more naval power in the Pacific than ever before.

Qualitative improvements in the entire range of vessels and aircraft assigned to the Pacific Fleet, in addition to absolute increases in numbers, provide the USSR with the ability to carry out the missions assigned to it in the region, as well as to be prepared to execute missions that have lower priority in Soviet naval strategy, if required. Especially in the areas of SLOC interdiction and power projection, the larger and more completely capable Navy has developed useful attributes such as better naval aviation and more potent surface and subsurface attack vessels. In addition, Soviet ship and aircraft deployment at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam have provided a means of increasing capabilities in these areas. Before considering the missions of the Soviet Pacific Fleet, it is useful to examine the basing of the fleet and of other Soviet military forces in the region.

2.3.0.2 Soviet Facilities in the Pacific

The Soviet Navy, the major source of potential threat to the United States in the Pacific, operates primarily out of bases in the Soviet Union, at Vladivostok (Fleet Headquarters), Sovetskaya Gavan, and Petropavlovsk, with some naval and air forces stationed in Vietnam at Cam Ranh Bay. In addition, some 53 Soviet Red Army divisions are deployed in the Far Eastern theatre of military operations, or TVD (*Teatr Voennykh Deistvii*).[90] These forces are stationed mainly along the USSR's border with the People's Republic of China;[91] however, 8,000-10,000 occupation forces stationed in the Kurile Islands north of the Japanese island of Hokkaido constitute a strategically relevant contingent. On these islands, which lie due east of the Soya Strait, Soviet forces maintain *MiG-23* fighter-bombers, together with early warning radars and antisubmarine warfare centres, designed to "...help shield the Okhotsk sanctuary and Maritime Province."[92] The Sea of Okhotsk is the main area in which the Soviets can deploy and defend SSBNs capable of strategic strikes against the United States, and the Kurile garrison, along with improvements in ASW capabilities and in SSN and SS technology would make an attempted assault upon the bastion quite difficult.

The Soviet Pacific Fleet faces geographical difficulties in its home port deployments. The SSBN fleet is based at Petropavlovsk on the Kamchatka Peninsula, which is the only port with unimpeded access to the Pacific Ocean; yet access to Petropavlovsk is constrained while the sea is frozen for four months of the year, though icebreakers can keep the port operating to some extent, and submarine operations are not severly hampered.[93] The ports of Vladivostok and Sovetskaya Gavan are frozen for three to four months of the year, and surface ship movement is inhibited during the freeze, despite the employment of icebreakers in both ports.[94] Soviet ships operating out of Vladivostok and Sovetskaya Gavan also forced to pass through the Sea of Japan and one of three narrow straits overlooked by U.S. allies South Korea or Japan. In the event of a conflict, the control of these straits could become a crucial factor in the waging of a successful campaign by either side. Also in the event of a conflict, the USSR would have the option of dispersing its SSBNs in the Pacific or, more probably, to deploy them within the Sea of Okhotsk, an SSBN bastion more easily defensible by Soviet naval forces, military forces based in the Kuriles, and ground-based aircraft.

Because of the difficulties involved in the use of Soviet home-water ports, efforts have been made to secure facilities in warm water ports for the use of the Navy, especially to support the more offensive of Soviet wartime missions and to increase peacetime presence, leverage, and prestige. In 1979, the Soviets gained access to facilities in Vietnam, at Cam Ranh Bay, for both naval and air forces. The usual deployments at Cam Ranh Bay comprise "...some 20 ships together with six attack and cruise missile

submarines, some of them nuclear-powered, [operating] daily in this area, an increase of 25 percent since 1982."[95] In addition, 8 *Bear* and 16 *Badger* aircraft provide reconnaisance and strike capabilities, and *MiG-23* fighter aircraft, together with SAMs, ensure at least some capability for defense of the base.[96]

The presence of these naval units and aircraft overlooking the SLOCs that link U.S. East Asian allies with petroleum supplies from the Middle East, as well as being only 870 nautical miles from the U.S. base at Subic Bay in the Philippines, is a complicating factor for U.S. military planners.[97] However, though the facilities at Cam Ranh Bay do provide a warm-water base for Pacific Fleet vessels that can contribute to SLOC interdiction and power projection, the base does not appear to be substantial enough to indicate that these missions have gained a greater priority in Soviet strategy in the region. That the bases are extremely important to the Soviets is evidenced by the amount of aid given to Vietnam since 1979 ($4.8 billion in military aid alone);[98] yet mainly transportable, rather than permanent facilities have been established, no *Backfire* bombers have been deployed at Cam Ranh Bay to date, facilities for sustaining naval forces for long periods of time have not been developed, neither have facilities for extensive repairs, and the base at present is not capable of being defended against a concerted U.S. attack.[99] Thus, though the capabilities offered by a base at Cam Ranh Bay are attractive to the Soviets, they do not seem to have been exploited in a manner which might indicate a serious intention of upgrading the missions of SLOC interdiction and power projection. The missions of Soviet forces at Cam Ranh Bay will be considered further in the following section.

2.3.0.3 The Missions of the Pacific Fleet

The tasks assigned to the Soviet Pacific Fleet are those which pertain to the Soviet Navy generally, among which the first priority is the securing of survival for SSBNs and the related missions of strategic defense, sea control, and sea denial. The missions of SLOC interdiction and power projection are secondary, though the former may be attractive in the event of a protracted conflict, while the latter might be executed to gain control of the Japanese Straits to secure Soviet access to the open ocean.

The establishment and defense of an SSBN bastion in the Sea of Okhotsk is widely regarded as the primary mission of the Soviet Pacific Fleet. The recent naval buildup in the Pacific has strengthened the Soviet ability to pursue this mission, through the deployment of more powerful anti-ship and ASW platforms; in addition,

> the geography of the Okhotsk region is extremely favourable. Soviet land and air dominance over at least its inner reaches appers assured. The many narrow straits that constrain exit are ideal to defend agaainst entry. Some underwater penetration might be possible, but shallow regions are particularly advantageous to the Soviet Navy's new diesel-electric submarines. Penetration by surface ships and carrier based aircraft is not likely.[100]

The capabilty of the Soviet Navy to achieve the mission of securing strategic strike forces must be judged to be quite good.

The missions of sea control and sea denial, as well as that of destroying enemy forces, have been enhanced by recent naval deployments. Increasingly powerful surface ships and submarines make the task of securing areas for the exclusive use of the Soviet Navy easier; such areas in the Pacific would be the Sea of Okhotsk, to provide the SSBN bastion, the Sea of Japan, and the Pacific Basin off the Kamchatka Peninsula.[101] For sea denial, the ability to destroy enemy warships is vital; here, too, Soviet capabilities in the Pacific have been improved by the newer, more powerful forces. In particular, the newer cruisers feature cruise missiles with a range of 350 nautical miles and ASW weapons with a range of 30 nautical miles; the *Sovremennyy* and *Udaloy* destroyers provide the same types of weapons (except an anti-ship range of only 60 n.m.), and all three of the new vessel classes provide SAM missile defense systems with a range of at least 20 n.m.[102] The presence in the Pacific Fleet's Naval Aviation wing of 40 *Backfire* bombers also provides a greater ability to ward off and destroy attacking forces.[103] The capacity of the Soviet Navy for carrying out attacks on enemy forces in the Pacific has certainly been increased by recent deployments; however, it is difficult to say with any certainty just how much stronger the Soviet Navy is in the region. Perhaps the most appropriate conclusion, in light of the increased Soviet attention to the contingency of protracted, potentially non-nuclear conflict, is that the Soviet buildup reflects a desire to strengthen all aspects of its naval forces, and by doing so seek to deter the occurence of war while being prepared to fight it if war eventuates. The ability to attack enemy vessels at longer ranges, with cruise missiles and bombers, adds to the potential costs an adversary would encounter in launching an attack, and makes the chance of securing the objective of sea denial greater.

Power projection and SLOC interdiction remain secondary missions of the Soviet Pacific Fleet, despite the additional capability which is afforded by the Soviet base at Cam Ranh Bay. It appears that the Soviet presence in the South China Sea pursues a number of objectives that are even lower on the priority scale, but are nevertheless useful; these may be seen as mainly peacetime naval missions. The motives for Soviet naval deployment in Vietnam appear to be "...to cover eventualities in case of war between the U.S. and the USSR, a war whose main focus would be in Europe; and to meet opportunities and threats arising in the Far East itself."[104] One of the major concerns of the Soviets in the region is its rivalry with the People's Republic of China, and the Soviet naval forces in Vietnam can serve to deter or counter any potential Chinese surface or submarine threat. As it is currently consituted, Cam Ranh Bay provides the Soviets with the ability

> to constrain U.S. power projection in the area by presenting the U.S. with the possibility of a superpower confrontation; to provide support to pro-Soviet communist insurgents should they become active in the region at some future date;...to facilitate rapid reaction between and in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific; to use in any limited, regional conflict involving only local powers like the PRC, Vietnam, and the member states of ASEAN, rather than in a general war in which the U.S. has become directly involved.[105]

The value of Cam Ranh Bay to the Soviet appears to lie in the context of their overall expansion of capabilities. The base provides the Soviets the means of responding or threatening response to a regional conflict, and of deterring U.S. involvement in such conflicts; in addition, Cam Ranh Bay gives the Soviets a better location from which to project political influence into the South East Asia region. Soviet presence in Vietnam has "...conferred upon the Kremlin a wide range of other geostrategic advantages useful to the attainment of state and ideological objectives."[106] The Soviet forces at Cam Ranh bay have "...maintained a naval presence, performed reconnaissance and intellegence collection duties, and protected the Soviet airlift, sealift, and Vietnamese ports."[107] Cam Ranh Bay facilitates the application of Soviet naval power in the Indian Ocean, and provides a forward base for forces that could be used in SLOC interdiction and power projection roles. Yet Soviet interest in these naval missions does not seem to have increased as the deployments in Vietnam have expanded; the relative lack of defenses and support capabilities reflect the secondary nature of the missions. Though Cam Ranh Bay provides the Soviets with enhanced prospects for contemplating SLOC interdiction or power projection, it has not served to significantly raise the value accorded to those missions in Soviet naval strategy, and the inadequacies of the base facilities limit the scope of its threat to U.S. forces and interests in the region.

2.4 Conclusions

The past ten years have witnessed a sustained buildup of the Soviet naval forces, with significant increases in numbers of vessels deployed and in the quality of those vessels. No area has received more attention than the Pacific: the Soviet Pacific Fleet has benefitted from the addition of the newest and most capable ships in the Soviet arsenal. This naval buildup can best be understood in the context of alterations in Soviet military strategy during the past decade, and in seeing that its basis lies "...in a determination to achieve parity with the United States in all aspects of power and influence."[108] Soviet military strategy seeks to advance the foreign policy goals of the Soviet Union, including the deterrence of general war, the protection of the homeland and important allies, and the expansion of Soviet influence at the expense of its rivals. In seeking deterrence, the Soviets have assumed a 'warfighting' posture: their doctrine holds victory to be the

ultimate goal of any conflict, nuclear or conventional, and Soviet strategy attempts to define the framework for achieving victory, should deterrence break down. By maintaining an aggressive posture, they seek to enhance deterrence and to be able to prevail if deterrence fails. But a shift appears to have taken place in the Soviet consideration of the nature of a potential war: there has been more recognition since 1977 of the potential mutual devastation from a nuclear war, and an acceptance of the fact of mutual deterrence. Soviet strategists have focused increasingly on the possibility of a limited nuclear war (with the homelands of the superpowers as sanctuaries) or of a protracted conventional war with the West. These strategic developments have been reflected in the buildup of forces across the spectrum, in an effort to increase the flexibility of response to various contingencies.

In the area of naval forces, the buildup has been most spectacular. The Soviet Navy has developed from a coastal defense force into a highly capable 'blue-water' navy, entrusted with a number of important missions within the overall Soviet military strategy. The primary naval mission remains that of securing a nuclear retaliatory force, in the form of SSBNs secured within ocean bastions and protected by surface and subsurface naval forces and bomber and fighter aircraft. Next in importance is the mission of sea control, or at least sea denial, designed to prevent enemy forces from being able to attack the SSBN forces or the Soviet homeland; the complementary mission is the destruction of enemy naval forces. In addition, the Soviet Navy is assigned to interdict SLOCs that the U.S. or its allies would use for resupply, especially in a protracted conflict, and to project power ashore, in support of certain limited but strategically important objectives; these missions remain secondary to those of strategic strike and sea control, despite recent shifts in doctrine. Finally, the Soviet Navy is employed in peacetime presence missions, to enhance Soviet prestige and to serve as a reminder of Soviet power and interests, and of Soviet support for its allies, surrogates, and clients. The capability for carrying out all of these missions has been significantly improved by the deployments of the past decade.

In the Pacific, the Soviet Navy has grown most quickly, and has caused a great deal of speculation regarding the intentions behind its qualitative improvement and the deployments of some force elements in Vietnam. For the Soviet Pacific Fleet, the primary mission is the same as for the Navy generally: to provide security for the SSBN fleet. The Sea of Okhotsk provides an ideal bastion for the SSBNs, and Soviet reinforcement of the Kurile Islands and improvements in surface and submarine ASW and anti-surface warfare capabilities have greatly enhanced their ability to carry out this mission. In addition, the same improvements in capability have made the Soviet Navy more able to control the areas around its home waters, and to contemplate more offensive

missions, including perhaps power projection to secure the exits for their Navy onto the high seas. The base at Cam Ranh Bay has provided the possibility of improving SLOC interdiction capabilities, but the facilities at that base, while causing the U.S. and other regional nations some concern, have not been established or exploited in a way that would optimize their usefulness for this naval mission, leading to the conclusion that the anti-SLOC mission remains of secondary priority for the Soviet Navy. The value of basing at Cam Ranh Bay seems to lie primarily in enhancing Soviet ability to maintain a presence in the region and to project forces into the Indian Ocean. The significant improvement of the Soviet Fleet, coupled with a strategic doctrine which increasingly considers the possibility of protracted conventional war, indicates that the Soviets will continue to pursue the goal of parity in all aspects of power with the U.S., to be better prepared for any contingency and to be prepared to exploit any opportunity for expanding Soviet influence.

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88. Daniel, Donald C. and Gael Donelan Tarleton, "The Soviet Navy in 1985," United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 112, No. 5 (Naval Review - May 1986), p. 99.

89. Collins, op. cit., p. 141.

90. *Soviet Military Power 1986*, p. 13.

91. Collins, op. cit., p. 141.

92. Ibid.

93. Jacobsen, op. cit., p. 1433.

94. Ibid.

95. Bernstein, op. cit., p. 22.

96. Ibid.; see also Collins, op. cit., p. 142, and *Understanding Soviet Naval Developments*, p. 25.

97. Collins, op. cit., pp. 140-142.

98. Bernstein, op. cit., p. 22.

99. Ibid., p. 23; and Collins, op. cit., p. 142.

100. Jacobsen, op. cit., p.1433.

101. Bernstein, op. cit., p. 25; see also *Soviet Military Power 1986*, p. 63.

102. Collins, op. cit., pp. 234-240.

103. Daniel and Tarleton, op. cit., pp. 99-100.

104. Bernstein, op. cit., p. 23.

105. Ibid.

106. da Cunha, Derek Martin, "A Moscow naval cordon around the 'Yellow Peril,'" *Far Eastern Economic Review* Vol. 133, No. 36 (4 September 1986), p. 28.

107. Watson, op. cit., p. 139.

108. Ranft and Till, op. cit., p. 48.

CHAPTER 3
The U.S. Maritime Strategy

3.1 Introduction

National security objectives and national military strategy are in large measure responsible for the composition, deployment, and strategies of the various military forces at the disposal of the United States. While there has been substantial continuity in the definition of broad national security objectives since World War II, national military strategy and the associated strategies for force elements such as nuclear weapons and the Navy have undergone some alterations. Such changes have been highlighted in the attempts of the Reagan Administration to redefine parts of the national miltary strategy and to reconfigure U.S. military forces to suit the revised strategies, in the context of an overall buildup of military strength. Salient among the innovations under the current Administration is the explicit declaration of a strategy for the U.S. Navy, known as the Maritime Strategy, which is designed to provide a framework for naval force development, deployment, and operations in the context of the overall national military strategy. The Maritime Strategy has been considered essential by members of the Administration, especially the recently resigned Secretary of the Navy, John Lehman, for the purpose of securing the major objectives of national strategy, namely deterring the Soviet Union or fighting the USSR should deterrence fail, along with being able to achieve the goals of national policy in peacetime and in lower-level conflicts. This chapter will first examine the shifts that have taken place in U.S. national military strategy since the late 1970s, and the concurrent evolution of U.S. naval strategy. The elements of the Maritime Strategy and the related missions of the U.S. Navy will be considered, with a particular emphasis on identifying the innovations brought about by the recent changes in strategy; and finally, the relationship of the Maritime Strategy to U.S. naval forces and posture in the Pacific will be considered. The implications of the new strategy for capabilities, deterrence, stability, and the requirements for U.S. defense commitments in the Pacific will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

3.2 The Evolution of the Maritime Strategy

The Maritime Strategy which has been developed over the past six years has grown out of the strong naval tradition of the United States and from a trend in U.S. military thinking which assigns a larger, more complex role to the Navy in overall military strategy than had been assigned to it in the 1970s. The framework of American military strategy has remained fairly consistent despite the advent of the Reagan Administration: the objectives continue to be those which governed U.S. strategic planning in the previous decade, and the basic strategy continues to be deterrence, with collective security and forward defense still the vehicles for response if deterrence fails. However, the Reagan Administration has placed added emphasis on the importance of forward defense, and the Maritime Strategy has been developed to enhance all three aspects of national military strategy through the employment of the U.S. Navy. The role of the naval forces has been greatly upgraded, and their missions have been changed with respect to the situation in the 1970s.

3.2.1 U.S. National Military Strategy in the 1970s

There are three main goals of U.S. national strategy. First, to maintain the security of the United States, second, to preserve the interests of allies and friends abroad, as well as vital U.S. interests abroad, and third, to help manage a global environment in which nations may coexist peacefully and the preservation and prosperity of American institutions could be better guaranteed.[109] U.S. military strategy, intertwined with political and economic policies, has for a long time been the means for achieving these goals. In the 1970s, as in the entire post-World War II era, the Soviet Union was identified as the major threat to U.S. security; the military strategy for coping with this threat centered on the principles of deterrence, collective security, and forward defense. This is clearly reflected in the statements of the Secretaries of Defense in this period, who stress the need for enhancing deterrence, and for building "...collective security on a firm foundation of conventional military power," while maintaining the threat of escalation to nuclear weapons if conventional deterrence should fail.[110] Forward defence is a key element of the strategy, with a stipulated requirement that U.S. and allied forward deployed forces "...be sufficient in the first instance to hold a forward defense in such critical areas as Europe and Northeast Asia," for the purpose of assuring the territorial integrity of allies which are located on the 'front lines:' "politically, a forward defense is essential."[111] The military strategy relies upon both conventional and nuclear forces for its implementation; the roles of both types of forces in the overall strategy will be considered in the following sections.

3.2.1.1 Conventional Force Posture

The decade of the 1970s saw a severe reduction in U.S. defense spending following the American withdrawal from the conflict in Vietnam, coupled with a lessening of U.S. commitments to employ military force worldwide. American strategy continued to depend on the its three traditional bases for security. But, in 1969, President Nixon promulgated the 'Guam Doctrine;' in anticipation of post-Vietnam war cuts in force levels, this doctrine "...placed upon U.S. Asian allies the primary responsibility for their own defense, restricting the U.S. contribution largely to the provision of air and naval power and, where needed, logistical support."[112] The following year, another retrenchment in U.S. military policy took place, which was again predicated on reduced U.S. force levels: the basis for U.S. force planning changed from a 'two-and-a-half-war strategy' to a 'one-and-a-half-war strategy.' The former strategy was designed to "deal simultaneously with a major contingency in Europe, a major contingency in Asia, and one or more lesser contingencies elsewhere...." The latter strategy sought to "deal simultaneously with one major contingency (wherever it might occur) and one minor cotingency, with the capability to 'swing' with some speed from one major theater to the other."[113] Both the Ford and Carter Administrations which followed Nixon used the 'one-and-a-half-war strategy' as the basis for their conventional forces strategy, and also focused increasingly upon the single-theatre contingency of the defense of Western Europe.[114]

This extended to a perception that it would be "...highly unlikely that the Soviets could (much less would) undertake simultaneously all the contingencies that must necessarily concern us, or that we would find it necessary to respond simultaneously to all of them."[115] The retrenchment of U.S. military strategy in this period is reflected particularly in the decline of the U.S. Navy within the conventional force strategy, a topic which will be examined more closely in a later section; naval forces have historically been considered a primary means of carrying out a forceful global strategy, which was in some measure deemphasized in the 1970s.

3.2.1.2 Nuclear Force Posture

U.S. nuclear forces strategy focuses on deterring the use of nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union, but does not preclude the use of nuclear weapons in the event of an attack by the Soviets that cannot be contained with conventional forces. Two documents, President Nixon's National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM)-242 of 1974 and President Carter's Presidential Directive (PD)-59 of 1980 define the basic U.S. strategy for the employment of nuclear weapons in the context of the total military strategy. Both of these strategies attempted to come to terms with a perceived need for limited

nuclear options caused by the incredibility of nuclear weapons use in the face of essential parity between the U.S. and USSR. Consequently,

> both based deterrence on war fighting abilities, as well as a balance of terror, and embraced flexible response, which formerly pertained almost entirely to conventional forces. The intent was to discourage all forms of nuclear aggression, by convincing Soviet leaders that escalation would be foolhardy and early termination advisable. U.S. abilities to respond across the complete conflict spectrum would cause them unacceptable costs, by any standards....Both strategies assumed that nuclear war might be protracted, whether limited or not, a novel idea which previous sages never took seriously.[116]

Deterrence of the Soviet Union by the threat of using nuclear weapons extended to any course of aggression the Soviets might contemplate. This strategic consideration was reflected in the Carter Administration's developement of more means for flexible nuclear response, including modernization of all three legs of the U.S. strategic triad and the combined NATO decision to modernize its Long-Range Tactical Nuclear Forces (LRTNF).[117] The essential task of U.S. nuclear forces was to deter Soviet aggression, and the Administrations of the 1970s began to perceive the ability to more credibly threaten the use of nuclear weapons at a variety of levels as the most effective deterrent. This concept of nuclear warfighting capability has been carried on by the Reagan Administration, which has added new forces to the U.S. nuclear arsenal for such purposes, as well as searching for means of enhancing conventional deterrence.

3.2.2 U.S. National Military Strategy in the 1980s

The Reagan Administration has not changed the basic objectives of national policy nor of national military strategy; but what is significant about the defense doctrines of the 1980s is the decision to again seek a more extensive form of deterrence, which plans for forces to be able to respond to a number of contingencies simultaneously, and the shifted emphases regarding the forces which are to carry out the strategy. President Reagan and his advisors took office "...committed to an across-the-board expansion and modernization of U.S. nuclear and conventional forces, to be financed by major sustained real annual increases in defense expenditure."[118] The primary diversion from the preceeding administration in the elements of national military strategy lies in the move away from the 'one-and-a-half-war strategy' for force planning; the 1980s have witnessed a shift towards a strategy for dealing with "...the demands of a worldwide war, including concurrent reinforcement of Europe, deployments to Southwest Asia and the Pacific, and support for other areas...."[119] The primary beneficiaries of this revamped strategy have been the conventional forces, particularly the U.S. Navy, which is again seen as a primary vehicle for achieving the prescribed global strategy. Nuclear forces have received considerable attention also, with the continued commitment of the Reagan

Administration to the modernization programs begun under President Carter, and the addition of air and sea-launched cruise missiles to the nuclear arsenal.

3.2.2.1 Conventional Force Posture

The main emphasis of the Reagan military buildup has been upon the improvement and expansion of U.S. conventional forces, coupled with a redefinition of their missions within the overall strategy. Military strategy is still designed "...to preserve U.S. and allied independence, integrity, and freedom, and our vital interests. We seek to achieve these objectives first without war, but if deterrence fails, by fighting to restore the peace."[120] Increased conventional capability has been sought both to enhance deterrence by increasing the survivability and credibility of conventional forces, thereby raising the nuclear threshhold, and to improve the chances of achieving a peace on favourable terms, if fighting must be resorted to. After many years of concentrating upon the Soviet threat to Europe, and specifically the military forces arrayed along the front in Central Europe, the perception emerged that "the conventional forces of the United States must be designed for many different contingencies and to cope with a wide range of threats."[121] From the perceived requirement of forces to meet 'many different contingencies' has grown a supplementary push for forces capable of directing counterattacks in areas away from the original scene of conflict. The Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Fred Charles Ikle', has asserted that

> we may be forced to cope with Soviet aggresion, or Soviet-backed aggression, on several fronts. But even if the enemy attacked in only one location, *we* might choose not to restrict ourselves to meeting aggression on the immediate front. Rather, we might decide to stretch our capabilities, to engage the enemy in many places, or to concentrate U.S. forces and military assets in several of the most critical arenas.[122]

This doctrine of 'horizontal escalation' represented a clear departure from the strategy of the previous decade which sought deterrence and warfighting capability in the 'swing' of forces from the secondary theatres to the primary theatre. The most obvious working out in practice of the strategic shift has been the rebuilding of the U.S. Navy to a size judged capable of permitting the execution of the strategy, which has been complemented by the development of the Maritime Strategy. This increase in the role of the Navy under the Reagan Administration, as compared with the 1970s, is described more thoroughly in a subsequent section.

3.2.2.2 Nuclear Force Posture

Under the Reagan Administration, a significant change has taken place in the consideration of likely contingencies of war. This Administration has emphasized non-nuclear war, and protracted combat.[123] Accordingly, the conventional forces of the U.S. have received primary attention in the military buildup. Nevertheless, nuclear forces have been upgraded during the 1980s, particularly the cruise missile forces. The modernization of the strategic nuclear triad, begun under President Carter, has continued, with the fitting of new warheads on *Minuteman III* ICBMs, deployment of the first *MX* ICBMs and *Trident* SSBNs, the installation of air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs) aboard *B-52* bombers, and the resurrection of the *B-1* bomber program.[124] The deployment of GLCMs in Europe has proceeded, and *Tomahawk* tactical land-attack cruise missiles have been deployed on U.S. Navy battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and submarines; *Tomahawks* were first deployed in June 1984, and are capable of carrying either nuclear or conventional payloads.[125]

Yet the improvements in U.S. nuclear forces have not signalled a shift in U.S. nuclear policy, because the purposes of the nuclear forces remain essentially the same as in the 1970s. Four purposes are generally served by U.S. nuclear weapons today: first, deterrence of nuclear attack against the United States; second, deterrence of conventional attack against U.S. forces abroad and U.S. allies; third, to promote war-termination on terms favourable to the U.S., even if nuclear weapons have been employed; and fourth, to prevent Soviet nuclear blackmail of the U.S. or its allies.[126] The modernization of U.S. nuclear forces has been designed to further enhance the credibility and survivability of those forces, and by doing so to expand the spectrum of flexible responses and the potential warfighting capability. In this respect, the weapons procured and deployed since 1980 have been fitted into a nuclear strategy that was developed by the Administrations of the previous decade. Only in the area of strategic defense has the Reagan administration drastically departed from previous administrations, by seeking since 1983 to develop anti-ballistic missile systems. However, the research and development program initiated for the 'Star Wars' systems has yet to produce any results that could cause a significant shift away from the current, long-standing nuclear forces strategy, and discussion of its potential implications are not within the scope of this thesis.

3.2.3 Naval Forces in U.S. Military Strategy

Naval power has been an important element of U.S. military strategy since the founding of the nation, and has played a key role in many of the conflicts in which the United States has been engaged throughout its history. Consequently, forces have always existed in the U.S. which have advocated and pursued a primary role for the Navy in the total military strategy. In particular, the American naval philosopher Alfred T. Mahan, writing around the turn of the 20th century, believed "...the efficient use of the sea to be the central and critical link in the chain of successes necessary to ensure national greatness."[127] The employment of the Navy in the Spanish-American War, and later in World War II seemed to provide compelling evidence of the utility for national policy of the 'command of the seas.' In the period since World War II, the strength of the Navy has varied in accordance with the greater of lesser emphasis placed upon its necessity as an tool of national military policy. In the 1970s, naval power was relegated to a secondary position, taking a back seat to forces which appeared to more directly support U.S. military policy at its focus in Western Europe, and the decrease in the size of the Navy took place along with a decrease of its role in strategy. The advent of the Reagan Administration has witnessed a modernization and expansion of the Navy, as the primary means to carry out the revamped conventional military strategy.

3.2.3.1 The Navy in the Late 1970s

Following U.S. withdrawal from the Vietnam War, military resources and the strategies to employ them declined in quantity and scope. Among the forces, the Navy bore a large share of the cutback, both through a reduction in forces and a decline in its strategic importance. Declining numbers of combatant ships in the early part of the decade forced the major reassessment of the Navy's missions. The number of combatants before 1970 was quite large: depending upon vessel classification, the maximum number reached was between 811 (in 1968), to 'well over a thousand.'[128] By the end of the 1970s, the number of naval surface combatants had fallen to less than 500, some sources placing the figure as low as 414 (in 1977).[129] This reduction was due primarily to the fact that many of the Navy's ships had reached the end of their useful lives, having been built during or shortly after World War II.[130] The smaller forces resulted in the reduction of possible missions for the Navy, and the redefinition of naval roles within the 'one-and-a-half-war strategy.'

In the mid-1970s the missions of the Navy were defined by the Department of Defense (DoD) as defending SLOCs, power projection, peacetime presence and contributing to nuclear deterrence through the SSBN fleet.[131] During this period, top priority was accorded in DoD declaratory strategy to the mission of securing SLOCs,

because of the concern in the U.S. military establishment over the possibility of a NATO war in Europe. This was especially true as the decade approached its end, with the Carter Administration's focus on the redressing the conventional balance in Europe drawing down the role of the Navy even further. By early 1978, Defense Secretary Brown was concerned with the potential vulnerability of the U.S. aircraft carriers, and asserted that "...the Navy's key function in the future will be to provide aircraft carrier protection for critical waterways, bases, and sea lanes."[132] At the same time, Brown sought to curtail the power projection mission of the Navy, placing limits on "...any naval role against the Soviet mainland, such as sending planes or landing troops, which the Navy had envisaged."[133] The primacy of the mission of SLOC defense was carried over from the previous Administration, as was the definition of the means for carrying it out: 'barrier' defense, or what is also described as 'defensive sea-control.' Defense Secretary Schlesinger had indicated that these barriers would consist of first, "passive defenses, attack submarines, and patrol aircraft," second, another barrier similar in composition to the first but strengthened by carrier-based aircraft, and third, "escort forces and the helicopters that accompany them."[134]

However, it is unclear how much the Navy's operational strategy was in fact influenced by the declaratory strategy which was enunciated by the Carter Administration; it appears that the strategy preferred by officers in the Navy was quite different. It has been noted that even in the 1970s, the Navy was "...most interested in preserving and enhancing its conventional war-fighting capability against the Soviet Union, which included an emphasis on offensive sea control."[135] This concept of naval strategy was reflected in the Navy's *Sea Plan 2000* force planning study, which emphasized offensive missions against the Soviet Union in the event of a conflict, according to the argument that "...placing the Soviets on the defensive immediately is the best way to dissuade them from launching attacks in the first place...."[136] With regard to the Pacific Fleet's strategy, one naval officer has pointed out that

> in all, American policies, doctrines, strategies, and wars have come and gone, and still the U.S. Seventh Fleet maintains essentially the same posture it assumed in the late 1940s. One concludes then, either that naval policies have been more enduring than specific premises of U.S. foreign policy, or that naval forces are not linked as directly to declared policies as is often assumed.[137]

But in the absence of a clear indication of U.S. operational strategy in the 1970s, it is necessary to infer the possible focus of operational strategy from the constraints imposed by declaratory strategy and from the statements of naval officers. Though the Navy's preferred strategy focused on offensive operations, the declaratory strategy of the Carter Administration clearly downplayed these missions. The element of civilian control

that could be exercised by an Administration guided by a more defensive strategy would have been bound to limit the extent to which the Navy could contemplate its preferred strategy in a crisis or a conflict. In addition, the perception of some naval officers is that the declaratory policy in fact reflected the Navy's posture in the late 1970s. For example, Vice Admiral James A. Lyons, the head of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, has stated that U.S. naval strategy in the 1980s "...evolved from a strategy that was primarily point-defense-oriented, to just protect convoys ... there really was no offensive side to the equation. You reacted to what the enemy chose to do."[138] Likewise, Vice Admiral Henry C. Mustin has reflected that, in the 1980s, the Navy has "...broken the Procrustean mold of the...'convoy escort navy'-only syndrome....Past practices narrowed the focus of naval alternatives and masked important contributions that the Navy can make to both deterence and warfighting."[139] In addition, the strategy elements of strikes against the Soviet homeland and possible attacks against Soviet SSBNs received little emphasis in the strategies of the 1970s, though they were not specifically deleted.[140] With no unclassified statement of U.S. operational strategy in the 1970s, the best that can be concluded is that the U.S. Navy's posture was in a state of uncertainty, with a declaratory strategy at odds with the Navy's preferred strategy, and that the declaratory policy in practice would have restrained the missions of the Navy.

By emphasizing the mission of sea-lane defense, and diminishing the power projection missions of the Navy, the Carter Administration sought to define a useful role for the Navy within the context of a smaller force and the focus of military strategy upon European contingencies. Despite a commitment within the declaratory strategy to "...maintain a strong defense posture in the Western Pacific," U.S. strategy in the Carter years called for "...the capability to deal with one major contingency at a time."[141] The continued reliance upon a 'swing' strategy caused fears that the Carter Administration had lost "...interest in maintaining a balance of power in northeast Asia and in the Pacific....the naval cuts are cited as an example of this trend."[142] In short, the decrease in the size of the U.S. Navy in the 1970s was accompanied by a naval declaratory strategy which limited the missions of the Navy and emphasized defensive sea-lane control focused on the contingency of war in Europe.

3.2.3.2 The Navy in the 1980s

President Reagan's Administration has departed significantly from the previous several Administrations in its declaratory naval policies. There has been a shift of focus in the 1980s towards the possible need to meet a variety of contingencies simultaneously, if necessary; in the context of the expansion of military strategy, the role of flexible and mobile naval forces has been highlighted, and the missions of the Navy have been

expanded. No longer is the focus primarily upon SLOC defense; rather, the Navy in the 1980s is expected to defend SLOCs in conjunction with forward attacks upon the Soviet forces and perhaps even homeland bases, as well as be prepared to project power into the Third World.[143] The Navy under Reagan is designed to be superior to the Soviet Navy, with superiority enhanced by a more offensive warfighting strategy which aims at destroying the Soviet Navy.[144] In many areas of the globe, the Navy is the main power projection force of the United States, and in this decade the purposes of power projection have been redefined: projection of power or its threat can enhance deterrence of the Soviet Union, as well as providing a means of meeting lower-level contingencies. Expansion of naval forces and abandonment of a 'swing' strategy have also been designed to enhance deterrence, by placing the threat of horizontal, conventional escalation in the realm of the possible and the credible. The focus on horizontal escaltion has enhanced the position of the Pacific theatre in naval declaratory strategy.

3.3 The Elements of the Maritime Strategy

The Maritime Strategy that has evolved under the Reagan Administration has as its main objective the determination of the role of the U.S. Navy in carrying out national military policy. As such, in the public pronouncements of high-ranking naval officials, it is said to embody "...the professional consensus of the leadership of the Navy and the Marine Corps on how to deter or, if necessary, fight, a future war."[145] Details of the strategy have been explicitly spelled out in the course of testimony before the U.S. Congress, and also in the major naval journals, with a notable article by the then-Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral James D. Watkins, entitled *The Maritime Strategy* which appeared in the United States Naval Institute *Proceedings* in January 1986. Watkins' statement of U.S. naval strategy represents an attempt to codify the missions of the Navy for peacetime operations, and its posture for war deterrence and warfighting; the document concentrates upon the tasks of warfighting following a failure of deterrence. According to Watkins,

> the Maritime Strategy is fully consistent with the national strategy documents and directives of this administration which emphasize the importance of maritime superiority to our national defense. It is a global strategy designed to meet a global and diverse threat, embracing all possible theaters of operations and their complex interrelationships, in peace, crisis, or war. It is a forward strategy, keeping with the national policy of forward defense and drawing on the forward-deployed posture and rapid mobility of naval forces. It emphasizes the importance of alliances and coalitions....It emphasizes the criticality of joint operations with our sister services....It focuses primarily upon the central strategic issue of deterring, and if deterrence fails, fighting a global war against the Soviet Union. It increasingly grapples with the issue of diversified violence in an era of violent peace, and considers how to provide deterrence accross the entire spectrum of possible conflicts. It presents a cohesive menu of global

> options for controlling escalation, drawing on the flexibility and range of capabilities inherent in naval forces, avoiding reliance on nuclear weapons, and recognizing the potential impacts of altering the balance by conventional means.[146]

Within the context of the Maritime Strategy, four basic missions of the Navy can be identified: peacetime presence, crisis response and direct military intervention in Third World conflicts, deterrence (nuclear and conventional), and warfighting.

3.3.1 Peacetime Presence

U.S. naval peacetime presence is designed to enhance deterrence and to further other national policy objectives. Naval forces are "...visible reminders of American power for all who see them during port calls or on television screens."[147] Through port visits and joint exercises with allied navies, the U.S. Navy serves to support allies and friends; this serves to "...provide a clear sign of U.S. interest in a given nation or region, and of U.S. commitment to protect its interests and its citizens."[148] Through a display of capability and commitment, these maneuvers help to deter war. The peacetime presence also permits naval forces to "...promote diplomatic, economic, and other objectives of foreign policy not specifically military in character....Port visits may support foreign policy objectives of promoting moderate and stable governments in unstable areas."[149] Though this role is routine, and often downplayed, it is a significant and important facet of naval strategy, not least because it is the most common mission in which the Navy is engaged, and because it is one that the Navy is well adapted to and good at performing. The fact that in 1985 the U.S. Navy participated in 86 combined exercises with 55 countries and made port visits in 108 countries attests to the scope of U.S. peacetime presence, and the capability with which this mission is performed.

3.3.2 Crisis Response and Power Projection in the Third World

The second major mission of the U.S. Navy involves the use of naval forces to respond to crises, and in particular to carry out direct military interventions in the Third World for this purpose. Admiral Watkins has cited this mission as important because, "if a war with the Soviets ever comes, it will probably result from a crisis that escalates out of control. Our ability to contain and control crises is an important factor in our ability to prevent global conflict."[150] In addition, the United States has interests in the Third World which it has often employed force to protect, and the Navy has played the major role in such activities: about 80% of the 250 cases of U.S. military force employment since World War II have featured naval forces.[151] Marine Corps amphibious forces are designed for such missions where the projection of armed troops ashore is needed; their primary utility is in Third World areas, and in situations such as the assault on Grenada in 1983, rather than against well-prepared opponents such as the Soviet Union.[152] Naval

forces are particularly useful for the task of crisis response because they are forward-deployed, rapidly mobile, in a condition of high readiness, highly flexible in the type of force they can project and also in the manner of their presence. They are capable of performing a variety of missions, such as surveilance, threatening use of force, conducting gunfire bombardments or air strikes, establishing a blockade, or preventing intervention by other, perhaps hostile, forces.[153] This component of the Maritime Strategy establishes a means for the Navy to promote U.S. national interests and the strategic goal of deterrence in the Third World and for managing crises in such areas to ensure that they do not escalate to threaten more vital U.S. interests or to involve the superpowers in a confrontation.

3.3.3 Deterrence

Given the hierarchy of national military objectives, the Navy's primary mission must be to deter the Soviet Union from committing aggression, nuclear or conventional, against a U.S. ally or in an area of vital U.S. interest. The missions of peacetime presence and crisis response indicate the role of the Navy in securing deterrence at low levels of violence, both vis-a-vis the USSR and in other contingencies not involving the Soviets; but deterrence of the Soviet Union takes on a particularly important role in the Maritime Strategy because of its focus on fighting a war if deterrence fails. The current Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Carlisle A.H. Trost, has stated that "the basis of deterrence is the creation of doubt in the enemy's mind as to what we would be capable of doing if he breaks the peace."[154] Therefore the Maritime Strategy deals largely with constructing a framework for fighting a war with the Soviet Union to lend credibility to the U.S. determination to fight if deterrence breaks down, thereby reinforcing a key element of deterrence, uncertainty. The concept of maintaining a warfighting capability and developing a strategy for waging war, in the interest of enhancing deterrence, is also one which drives Soviet military doctrine. The Navy provides means of enhancing deterrence both through its nuclear delivery vehicles and by its conventional forces. Nuclear forces are designed primarily for retaliatory missions, while the conventional forces are designed to be able to fight a war with the Soviet Union should it break out.

3.3.3.1 Nuclear Deterrence

The Navy maintains a large inventory of nuclear forces which are intended to provide a survivable means of retaliation against the USSR if it should make an attack upon the U.S. or its allies. The Joint Chiefs of Staff indicate that "the fundamental objective of all U.S. nuclear forces is to remove all incentives for direct attack against the United States or its allies by promising any attacker a devastating outcome."[155] The Navy relies mainly on SSBNs for its nuclear strike capability, although *Tomahawk* cruise

missiles and carrier-based aircraft are also capable of delivering nuclear weapons against targets either on land or at sea.[156] As of the beginning of 1985, SSBNs carried 592 SLBMs with 5344 warheads, which represented less than one-third of U.S. strategic missile launchers, yet accounted for nearly half of U.S. strategic nuclear warheads.[157] These nuclear forces provide an extremely survivable means of retaliation against the USSR, due in part to the difficulty inherent in locating submarines in the open ocean (an area of pariticular Soviet weakness).[158] Sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs) are being installed aboard a number of U.S. surface ships and submarines, and represent another potential threat to Soviet forces; however, though U.S. doctrine acknowledges the need for a capablity to use nuclear weapons at sea, "U.S. Navy strategists have never devoted much time to tactical nuclear warfare."[159] This issue is dealt with in only a passing way by Admiral Watkins in "The Maritime Strategy," in a passage which indicates that *Tomahawk* platforms deployed around the periphery of the Soviet Union can improve U.S. nuclear posture and influence the 'correlation of nuclear forces,' upon which "the Soviets place great weight...even during the time before nuclear weapons have been used." Watkins also sees the threat of tactical nuclear weapons use as a means of securing *conventional* war termination on U.S. terms and of deterring escalation to nuclear weapons. The issue of when and how to use naval tactical nuclear weapons is not discussed. Nuclear forces in the U.S. Navy, under current strategy, are designed primarily for retaliatory missions or for threatening direct attacks to deter the use of any nuclear weapons; there is little consideration of the policy for employment of naval tactical nuclear weapons or the defense against Soviet use of such weapons.

3.3.3.2 Conventional Deterrence

Most of the attention of the Maritime Strategy has been devoted to the issue of fighting a conventional war with the Soviet Union in the event that deterrence should fail. The issue is a complex one, and the strategy which the Navy has enunciated in the past few years has drawn considerable criticism for the warfighting missions which have been set for the forces. Some of these criticisms are considered in the next chapter. In essence, a warfighting strategy is designed to reflect a warfighting capability and a determination to fight, which is designed to prevent a war from occuring at all. This is the case with the Maritime Strategy's concern with the broad details of a conventional naval campaign against the USSR. The following section discusses the main features of the warfighting strategy.

3.3.4 Warfighting

The need to be prepared to fight a global war with the Soviet Union, should deterrence fail, has been the primary concern of the Navy in the developement of the Maritime Strategy in the 1980s. During this decade, a number of different offensive missions have been considered as pertaining to the warfighting strategy, with a shifting emphasis among them in terms of priority. As a result, "...the Maritime Strategy is, in effect, an inclusive package of four offensive postures: direct naval impact, horizontal escalation, offensive sea control, and counterforce coercion."[160] The Maritime Strategy assumes that

> should war come, the Soviets would prefer to use their massive ground force advantage against Europe without having to concern themselves with a global conflict or with actions on their flanks. It is this preferred Soviet strategy the United States must counter. The key to doing so is to ensure that they will have to face the prospect of prolonged global conflict. Maritime forces have a major role to play in this regard. The strategy setting forth their contribution consists of three phases: deterrence or the transition to war; seizing the initiative; and carrying the fight to the enemy.[161]

Because emphasis on a warfighting strategy has returned to declaratory policy only in recent years, there is still considerable debate regarding the missions which the Navy could and would undertake in a conflict. What is described in the next few paragraphs is the outline of the major elements of the Maritime Strategy as enunciated by Admiral Watkins, refered to by him as the 'professional consensus of the leadership of the Navy.' Again, however, it is difficult to be sure how far the declaratory strategy goes towards defining operational strategy in crises and conflicts.

The first phase of a potential war is described as 'deterence or the transition to war,' and focuses on the twin goals of attempting to maintain deterrence while mobilizing in preparation for the coming of war if peace cannot be maintained. In this phase, the U.S. would "...seek to win the crisis, to control escalation...," and by operations worldwide show resolve to fight.[162] The centerpiece of these operations would be forward deployment, which represents a key element of military strategy even in peacetime. In the words of Admiral Watkins, "the need for forward movement is obvious. This is where the Soviet fleet will be, and this is where we must be prepared to fight."[163] Forward movement of ASW forces will force the Soviets to retreat into their defensive bastions to protect their SSBNs, denying them the option of 'massive, early' interdiction of allied SLOCs. Two other factors influence the urgency of moving forward rapidly:

> early forward deployment of sea-based air power also is essential to support our allies, particularly Japan, Norway, and Turkey....Forward deployment must be global as well as early. Deployments to the Western Pacific directly enhance deterrence, including deterrence of an attack in Europe, by providing a clear

> indication that, should war come, the Soviets will not be able to ignore any region of the globe. Should deterrence fail, such deployments tie down Soviet forces, especially strike aircraft, limiting the Soviets' ability to concentrate their forces on Central Europe.[164]

This statement presents the Soviets with the threat of direct military impact and horizontal escalation from the U.S. Navy; one naval officer has concluded that "the massive nature of the forward movement (indicating national will) and its global nature ... are both designed to reinforce deterrence while being easily reversible if deterrence prevails."[165]

The second phase of the warfighting strategy assumes that deterrence has failed; in this event, the U.S. Navy is called upon to 'seize the initiative.' In this phase, the missions of offensive sea control and counterforce coercion could be first manifested. Seizure of initiative involves "...the establishment of sea control in key maritime areas as far forward and as rapidly as possible. U.S. and allied ASW forces will wage an aggressive campaign against all Soviet submarines, including ballistic missile submarines."[166] This aggressive surface and subsurface action contributes to alliance solidarity by demonstrating that the U.S. is prepared to fight in the vicinity of and in defense of even those allies which are on the exposed flanks of NATO and those in Asia which are close to the USSR. This would prevent any chance of Soviet action against SLOCs by forcing them to concentrate upon defense in or close to their home waters, and to draw their focus away from the land battle on the Central European front, to "...dilute their effort, divert their attention, and force them to divide their forces."[167] The mission of attacking submarines appears to be designed primarily to destroy Soviet attack submarines or force the major part of the SSN/SS fleet to defend SSBNs in home bastions, preventing them not only from attacking allied shipping, but also from attacking allied surface warships and especially aircraft carriers. This phase of a war would also feature a goal of countering Soviet air threats to U.S. and allied ships by means of a layered antiair warfare approach; the threat from Soviet land-based naval aviation bombers is considered the main threat to the fleet during this phase.[168]

The final phase of a war, 'carrying the fight to the enemy,' involves continued prosecution of counterforce coercion while completing the destruction of the Soviet fleet (begun in the second phase) and threatening attacks from the sea against Soviet homeland naval bases; the goal in this phase again is to seek war termination on favourable terms. By destroying the Soviet Navy, it becomes possible to threaten direct attacks upon the Soviet homeland; by attacking Soviet SSBNs, the U.S. Navy would seek to reduce "...the attractiveness of nuclear escalation by changing the nuclear balance in our favor."[169] Through the direct threat to the homeland and by the prevention of

escalation to nuclear weapons because of the unfavourable correlation of force, "maritime forces thus provide strong pressure for war termination that can come from nowhere else."[170] The mission of 'counterforce coercion,' which in practice means the destruction of Soviet SSBNs, is the element of the Maritime Strategy which has perhaps caused the most controversy. The implications of this mission will be discussed more thoroughly in the next chapter.

It is worth noting two points before moving to a discussion of the Maritime Strategy in the Pacific. First, the Maritime Strategy as currently defined contains elements that are of recent addition and upon which there is in fact a lack of consensus within the Navy; and second, the strategy is designed to be flexible in its employment. John Mearscheimer describes clearly the evolution of the Maritime Strategy under the Reagan Administration from a focus primarily upon offensive sea-control and horizontal escalation to a more complex strategy encompassing these missions as well as direct military impact and counterforce coercion, the last of which he describes as the 'centerpiece' and 'principle goal' of the Maritime Strategy.[171] Yet he conceeds that the Navy did not explicitly define counterforce coercion as part of the Maritime Strategy in public statements until the appearance of Admiral Watkins' article in January 1986, and neglects the opposition to this element of the Strategy from within the Navy itself.[172] Mearscheimer himself notes that "...there are almost certainly important disagreements about strategy among the different constituencies in the Navy."[173]

This leads to a second point, that the Maritime Strategy is flexible, as well as being mutable: Admiral Trost points this out when he states that

> ...the strategy is flexible, as strategies always must be to be effective. It is not a game plan....If deterrence fails, what our actions would be at the time is a matter for the commanders involved to determine *at that time*....Right now, we can't say what our exact response would be to a Soviet attack. It would depend on where, when, and how big it was, and who was involved....Let them worry about what we are capable of doing, and let us not give them any easy assurances ahead of time. The Maritime Strategy reserves the employment of forces to the absolutely indispensable element of the evaluative process.[174]

Faced with these considerations, it is hard to be sure how faithfully the Navy's declaratory strategy translates into operational policy. Because there continues to be debate within the Navy over the details of the strategy, for example, certainty that the element of pro-SSBN attacks would actually be pursued is impossible; as Admiral Watkins has written, "the strategy does not envision automatic attacks on any specific targets...."[175] Even if such attacks are part of operational strategy, concerns about their ramifications in light of particular circumstances could result in it a decision not to implement this part of the strategy. Again, conclusions are constrained by a lack of

material regarding naval operational policy. It does seem, however, that the emphasis in declaratory strategy on offensive operations, reflected in the Maritime Strategy, represents a departure from many of the elements which apparently guided naval planning in the 1970s.

3.4 The Maritime Strategy in the Pacific

The Pacific Ocean is an area of great interest to the United States, for geographical, historical, and economic reasons. The U.S. is a Pacific nation by virtue of its long coastline on the ocean and the control, in or on the Pacific, of the States of Alaska and Hawaii, as well as Midway Island, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands, all of which are remote from the 'continental' United States. The U.S. Navy has had an interest in the Pacific that dates back to the early years of nationhood, and it has a proud history of success in the Pacific theatre: in 1898, a naval force completely destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila harbour to help secure the conquest of the Philippines, and in World War II, the Navy's victories in the Coral Sea, at Midway, and in the Philippines Sea helped to pave the way for the defeat of Japan. The long-time connection with the Pacific has left a legacy within the Navy, which "...continues to hold a certain interest and fascination with the Pacific region and its experiences there which directly translates into central factors for defining and determining naval priorities and maritime strategies that have also been applied to other geographic regions."[176]

U.S. concerns in the Pacific have proliferated since World War II. U.S. economic interest in the Pacific has grown considerably in the past few decades, and "...since 1980 the Pacific Rim has superseded Western Europe as America's most important overseas trading partner."[177] The United States maintains a number of security agreements with Pacific region nations, including Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand, which commit it to respond in some way to attacks upon any of these nations. U.S. interests in the Pacific have always been strong, and have developed even more in recent years, especially because of the increased importance of the region to the U.S. economically, and because of the increasing Soviet interest and military deployments in the Pacific. Since the U.S. Navy constitutes the primary source of U.S. military power in the region, its strategy in particular has paid more attention to the perceived need to protect U.S. Pacific interests. The Maritime Strategy developed in the 1980s contains a number of elements that reflect U.S. concerns about Pacific security.

3.4.1 The Importance of the Pacific

With the advent of the 1980s and the codification of the Maritime Strategy, the Pacific has assumed a position of importance in the strategic posture of the U.S. Navy, both because of the requirements for protecting U.S. interests in the region and for purposes of deterring the Soviet Union within the context of overall military strategy. John Lehman has pointed out the fact that American interests in the Pacific are now 'vital,' and thus deserving of attention comparable to that devoted to Europe; in describing and defending the abandonment of the 'swing' strategy, he has noted that

> clearly, our increasing commercial interest and historic security ties in the Pacific impact on our naval planning for the area. If we are to protect our vital interests, we must have forces available to deploy--not only to the Atlantic theaters and the Sixth and Second fleets--but also to the Pacific simultaneously, to the Seventh and Third Fleets and the Middle East Force of the Central Command. We cannot abandon one theater in order to deal with the other. The great paradox of the 1970s was the reduction of the fleet's size so it could only be employed in a 'swing strategy'--just as that strategy was being rendered obsolete by trade, geopolitics, and the growth of the Soviet Navy.[178]

The importance of defending U.S. interests in the Pacific is also closely tied to the strategic goal of deterring Soviet aggression: "secure deterrence requires that the United States and our allies maintain a balance of conventional forces able to meet and fight for a sustained period against a conventional Soviet attack in Western Europe, Northeast Asia, and Southwest Asia."[179] Pacific missions of the Navy have increased in value for the strategic purposes of maintaining commitments to allies, securing deterrence, and protecting U.S. interests; but the Pacific has also figured in the development of the warfighting doctrines described by the Maritime Strategy.

U.S. naval forces in the Pacific have for a long time been assigned the mission of forward deployment in support of 'front-line' allies, namely Japan and South Korea; under the Maritime Strategy, however, they might be expected to wage a major conflict with the Soviet Navy at the same time as a war was being fought in Europe. President Carter's Administration had defined the Pacific as a theatre of secondary priority, yet an Administration spokesman also stated publicly that "it is our policy, nonetheless, to maintain a strong defense posture in the Western Pacific, not only as a demonstration of our interest and presence in the region, but also because we would want to deter any reckless actions in Northeast Asia...."[180] The U.S. naval presence in the Western Pacific has not changed significantly in numerical terms since the days of the Carter Administration;[181] however, important qualitative improvements have occurred in the Pacific Fleet. All but one of the Pacific Fleet's aircraft carriers now carries *F-14* interceptors armed with Pheonix air-to-air missiles, and in addition,

> F/A-18 Hornets were deployed aboard the USS Constellation in February 1985. P-3 Orion ASW support has expanded and improved. Three nuclear-powered cruisers bolstered battle groups in 1984. New frigates and destroyers now dominate the escort mix, the total is larger by 10, and almost all mount Harpoon missiles. One battleship bearing land-attack Tomahawks already is assigned; a second is expected. The attack submarine count rose from 37 to 44, including 11 Los Angeles class.[182]

Though there has not been an increase in forward deployed forces in the Pacific, the overall number of vessels potentially available, and the quality of the vessels, has increased.

In line with the apparent shift towards more aggressive missions for the U.S. Navy as a whole (at least in the declaratory strategy, and seemingly at the operational level as well), the missions of the Pacific Fleet have changed somewhat. In the 1970s, the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Admiral Maurice F. Weisner predicted that in a conflict with the Soviet Union, "...one would forsee primarily a struggle for control of the vital lines of communication (LOCs) throughout the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions."[183] The Maritime Strategy anticipates aggressive, offensive action by the Pacific Fleet at the same time as U.S. and allied Navies in the Atlantic are attacking Soviet naval forces in the Norwegian Sea and even in their home waters off the Kola Peninsula. This declared mission for the Pacific forces is designed to serve first as an additional deterrent against Soviet aggression, and second, in the event of a war, as a means of "...employing the Navy as a strategic instrument to counter-balance and restrain Soviet military power in the Pacific and keep it from being brought to bear in Europe and the Atlantic...."[184] As a result of the Pacific campaign in World War II, the Navy has perceived the need to be seen as capable of operating in high-risk areas to ensure credibility; the ability to threaten attacks close to the Soviet shores is also intended to keep elements of the Soviet fleet occupied in homeland defense and away from missions more threatening to Western forces, as well as to enhance the deterrent posture to prevent conflict.[185] The Maritime Strategy's role for the Navy in the Pacific is true to these aims.

3.4.2 U.S. Forces and Missions in the Pacific

The missions of the U.S. Seventh and Third Fleets in the Pacific are to maintain a deterrent presence and forward-deployed posture in peacetime, to be prepared to project force in support of U.S. interests in the region, to maintain a nuclear retaliatory force (with SSBNs), and to be prepared to fight a conventional war with the Soviet Union should deterrence fail. In the context of the Maritime Strategy, it is this last mission that has changed the most. The Navy's two Pacific fleets contain nearly half of the U.S. principal surface combatants, including six aircraft carriers, two battleships, and 18

cruisers.[186] In addition, 42 SSNs and SSs are assigned to the Pacific, along with seven of the 36 U.S. SSBNs. Of these forces, about one-quarter are forward-deployed: the Seventh Fleet, assigned to the Western Pacific, is comprised of 23 surface combatants, including two carriers, 15 SSNs and SSs, and six amphibious vessels.[187] The headquarters of the Seventh Fleet is located at the naval base in Yokosuka, Japan; other bases of the Seventh Fleet are located at Subic Bay, Philippines, Guam, and Midway. The Second Fleet, in the Eastern Pacific, retains the balance of U.S. Pacific forces, except for detachments from both fleets assigned periodically to the Indian Ocean and based at Diego Garcia.[188]

U.S. Pacific forces are forward based to help deter the Soviets and to assist our allies in the event of a conflict; in the event of a war, the Maritime Strategy envisions their reinforcement from the Second Fleet and their agressive attack against Soviet forces. According to the Secretary of the Navy, "in wartime, we would deploy five carrier battle groups to the Seventh Fleet, two battleship action groups, and four underway replenishment groups."[189] Two of the Seventh Fleet's carrier battle groups would meet U.S. commitments in the Southwest Asian region, while the Third Fleet would retain two carrier battle groups for the defense of the mid-Pacific, the Eastern Pacific, and the seas surrounding Alaska.[190] In light of U.S. perceptions of Soviet naval strategy, U.S. forces in the Pacific would be called upon to fight a war in or near the Sea of Japan, and perhaps off the coast of the USSR near the base at Petropavlovsk. As indicated above, the Maritime Strategy calls for 'forward operations,' to prevent Soviet forces from leaking out of their bastions into areas where they could threaten allied SLOCs; in the Pacific theatre, this translates into sorties against Soviet forces in the entrances/exits of the Sea of Japan as well as against the bastion in the Sea of Okhotsk and the Kamchatka Peninsula. This marks an apparent departure from previous declaratory strategy, which stressed barrier operations and convoy protection to protect SLOCs. Because of the qualitative advancements in the Soviet Navy in recent years, and the strenthening of the forces in the Kurile Islands, it is generally concluded that U.S. forces would find it 'hazardous to penetrate' the Soviet bastions in a war.[191]

Nonetheless, the mission assigned to the U.S. Pacific naval forces is to be prepared "...to sink the enemy's navy."[192] By implication, this would involve direct attacks upon the Soviet fleet elements, including possibly SSBNs, in their home waters. If the decision were taken to attempt them, such attacks would be designed to keep Soviet naval forces bottled up in the bastions, to threaten attacks upon the Soviet homeland, and if possible to destroy some of the Soviet SSBNs in an effort to secure war-termination leverage. The implications of these and other aspects of the Maritime Strategy, and the particular effects on the Pacific theatre, are discussed in the next chapter.

3.5 Conclusions

United States military power has experienced a major buildup in the 1980s. The U.S. Navy in particular has benefitted from a commitment on the part of the Reagan Administration to increased defense spending, which at least in the early years of the decade received broad public and Congressional support. Objectives of national policy and national military strategy have remained consistent with those of earlier Administrations: the bases of U.S. military strategy remain deterrence, forward defense, and alliance solidarity. However, elements of the military strategy have been altered, along with the forces designed to carry out the strategy. This is again most evident in the development of the Navy's Maritime Strategy, in which emphasis has been placed on the ability to fight a war if deterrence should fail. The importance of forward defense has been stressed, both for ensuring the ability to defend allies close to the USSR and to improve the U.S. deterrent posture. The Reagan Administration has also developed a more global outlook for military strategy: unlike the Carter Administration, which based its strategic outlook on the 'one-and-a-half-war strategy,' the current Administration has sought stronger and more balanced capabilities to be able to respond to a number of contingencies simultaneously. From the days of the Nixon Administration, U.S. nuclear weapons policy was predicated upon the need for a credible, flexible capability for warfighting to secure deterrence; the Reagan Administration has expanded this concept to include conventional warfighting strategies.

Among the aspects of the 1980s military buildup, the large increase in the size and missions of the U.S. Navy stands out. By the late 1970s, the Navy had shrunk to fewer than 500 surface combatants, and its role in declared military strategy had shrunk, as more emphasis was placed upon defensive tasks and less on offensive, aggressive missions. At least to some extent, operational policy followed suit, and the Navy's preferred policy, which emphasized offensive operations, was constrained. Also, the focus upon potential superpower conflict in Europe required the Navy to 'swing' from the Pacific to the Atlantic in the event of such conflict, and the force structure and strategy did not permit attention to more than one major contingency at a time. In the 1980s, the naval forces have sought to reestablish 'superiority' over their Soviet counterparts, and a 600-ship Navy has been developed to permit the Navy to wage conflicts simultaneously in two (or more) separate theatres. The Maritime Strategy that has been enunciated in this decade stresses the need to define a strategy for fighting a war, as an additional means of deterring the Soviet Union. This has added a fairly complete framework for waging war to the naval missions of peacetime presence, crisis response, and power projection which have also served to protect U.S. interests. However, the details of the strategy are still the subject of debate, both within and outside the Navy. Offensive missions, absent for

the most part from declaratory strategy in the 1970s, have been stressed, and there seems to be more focus upon these missions in operational terms as well. The Reagan Administration's concern for developing a capability to respond to multiple contingencies has been a major factor driving the enlargement of the Navy and the return to prominence of its offensive missions.

The Pacific region has gained importance for the U.S. in the 1980s, with an expansion in trade and significant Soviet deployments supplementing previous historical and strategic interests in the region. Declaratory strategy in this decade has reflected the increased importance of the Pacific for the U.S. by reaffirming U.S. commitments in the region, but moreover by abandoning the swing strategy which characterized naval policy in the 1970s. The Pacific Fleet is now expected to operate independently in support of U.S. interests in the Pacific, including perhaps conducting attacks against the Soviet Fleet in conjunction with operations in other theatres under the doctrine of horizontal escalation. The value which the U.S. sees in the Pacific is clear from the fact that almost half of the entire Navy is based in this ocean, and that significant modernization has taken place in the Pacific Fleets; the forward strategy which has been developed in declaratory policy reflects this importance, with its emphasis upon enhancing both deterrence and the ability to protect U.S. allies through the capability and determination to carry out forward operations in the Pacific simultaneously with operations elsewhere.

Notes

109. Weinberger, op. cit., p. 27. Weinberger declares that "...the basic goals of our national security policy remain essentially unchanged since the late 1940s...;" that the goals of national security policy in the 1970s were essentially the same, see Brown, Harold, *Report of the Secretary of Defense to the Congress on the FY 1982 Budget, FY 1983 Authorization Request and FY 1982-1986 Defense Programs* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1981), pp. 3-5, hereafter cited as Brown, *FY 1982 Budget Report*.

110. Brown, Harold, *Department of Defense Annual Report, Fiscal Year 1979* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1978), p. 79, hereafter cited as Brown, *FY 1979 Budget Report*; see also pp. 79-87, and Schlesinger, James R., *Report of the Secretary of Defense to the Congress on the FY 1976 and Transition Budgets, FY 1977 Authorization Request and FY 1976-1980 Defense Programs* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975), pp. III-6 to III-13.

111. Brown, *FY 1979 Budget Report*, p. 82.

112. Record, Jeffrey, *Revising U.S. Military Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: Pergamon Brassey's International Defense Publishers, 1984), p. 7.

113. Schlesinger, op. cit., pp. III-9 and III-10.

114. Record, *Revising U.S. Military Strategy*, p. 32.

115. Brown, *FY 1979 Budget Report*, p. 80.

116. Collins, op. cit., p. 56.

117. Brown, *FY 1982 Budget Report*, pp. 5-6.

118. Record, *Revising U.S. Military Strategy*, p. 39.

119. Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger, cited in Record, *Revising U.S. Military Strategy*, p. 42.

120. Weinberger, op. cit., p. 33.

121. Ikle', Fred Charles, "The Reagan Defense Program: A Focus on the Strategic Imperatives," *Strategic Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Spring 1982), p. 14.

122. Ibid., p. 15.

123. Friedman, Norman, "US Maritime Strategy," *International Defense Review*, Vol. 18, No. 7 (July 1985), p. 1072.

124. Collins, op. cit., pp. 57-58; see also *The Military Balance* for the various years of this decade.

125. Collins, op. cit., p. 81.

126. Ikle', op. cit., p. 17.

127. Lehman, John F., Jr., "Rebirth of a U.S. Naval strategy," *Strategic Review*, Vol. 9, No. 3 (Summer 1981), p. 11.

128. The first figure is cited in Record, *Revising U.S. Military Strategy*, Appendix D, p. 102, and is based on information provided to the author by the Department of the Navy; the second figure is provided by Friedman in op. cit., p. 1073.

129. Record, op. cit., p. 102.

130. Weinland, Robert G., *The U.S. Navy in the Pacific: Past, Present, and Glimpses of the Future*, Professional Paper No. 264 (Alexandria, Virginia: Center for Naval Analysis, Institute of Naval Studies, 1979), pp. 8-10.

131. Schlesinger, op. cit., p. III-20.

132. Weinraub, Bernard, "Brown Seeks to Cut Navy's Role in Nonnuclear War," *The New York Times*, January 27, 1978, p. A8.

133. Ibid.

134. Schlesinger, op. cit., p. III-25.

135. Williams, John A., "U.S. Navy Missions and Force Structure: A Critical Reappraisal," *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Summer 1981), p. 506.

136. Ibid.

137. McGruther, op. cit., p. 32.

138. quoted in Gordon, Michael R., "Lehman's Navy Riding High, But Critics Question Its Strategy and Rapid Growth," *National Journal*, Vol. 17 (September 21, 1985), p. 2123.

139. Mustin, Vice Admiral Henry C., "Maritime Strategy from the Deckplates," United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 112, No. 9 (September 1986), p. 36.

140. Gordon, op. cit., p. 2123.

141. Brown, *FY 1979 Budget Report*, pp. 91, 90.

142. Burt, Richard, "U.S. Defense Debate Arises Over Whether Focus on Europe Neglects Other Areas," *The New York Times*, March 24, 1978, p. 3.

143. Friedman, op. cit., p. 1074.

144. Record, *Revising U.S. Military Strategy*, p. 43.

145. Brooks, Linton F., "Naval Power and National Security," *International Security*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Fall 1986), p. 59.

146. Watkins, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

147. Williams, "The U.S.and Soviet Navies: Missions and Forces," p. 509.

148. Watkins, op. cit., p. 8.

149. U.S. Congress, Senate Appropriations Committee, *Hearings on the Department of Defense Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1987* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986), p. 126., hereafter cited as *SAC Hearings on FY 87 Defense Budget.*

150. Watkins, op. cit., p. 8.

151. Ibid.

152. Williams, "The U.S. and Soviet Navies: Missions and Forces," p. 515.

153. Watkins, op. cit., p. 8.

154. Trost, Carlisle A.H., "Looking Beyond the Maritime Strategy," United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 113, No. 1 (January 1987), p. 16.

155. *United States Military Posture for FY 1987*, p. 8.

156. Williams, "The U.S. and Soviet Navies: Missions and Forces," p. 511.

157. Collins, op. cit., pp. 174, 177, 180.

158. *Understanding Soviet Naval Developments*, p. 31.

159. Collins, op. cit., p. 83.

160. Mearscheimer, John J., "A Strategic Misstep, *International Security*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Fall 1986), p. 17.

161. Watkins, op. cit., p. 8.

162. Ibid., p. 9.

163. Ibid.

164. Ibid., p. 10.

165. Brooks, op. cit., p. 65.

166. Ibid.

167. Watkins, op. cit., p. 11.

168. Ibid., p. 12.

169. Ibid., p. 13.

170. Ibid., p. 14.

171. Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep," pp. 19-25.

172. Mearscheimer cites a number of documents which show that some naval comentators considered the pro-SSBN mission before it was included as a feature of Watkins' "The Maritime Strategy" (see Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep," p. 22n); however, there was opposition to these articles, particularly to David B. Rivkin "No Bastion for the Bear," United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 110, No. 4 (April 1984), pp. 36-43. See, for example the letters in "Comment and Discussion," *Proceedings*, Vol. 110, No. 6 (June 1984) from Commander Fredrick J. Glaeser, USN, and Captain W.J. Ruhe, USN (retired), and in "Commment and Discussion," *Proceedings*,

Vol. 110, No. 7 (July 1984) from Captain Robert H. Smith, USN (retired), which are severely critical of the Rivkin essay.

173. Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep," p. 18.

174. Trost, op. cit., p. 16.

175. Watkins, op. cit., p. 12.

176. Ullman, Harlan K., "The Pacific and US Naval Policy," *Naval Forces*, Vol. 6, No. 6 (1985), p. 36.

177. Smolowe, Jill, "Pacific Overtures," *Time Australia*, Vol. 1, No. 18 (November 17, 1986), p. 58.

178. U.S. Congress, *SAC Hearings on FY 87 Defense Budget*, pp. 78-79.

179. Weinberger, op. cit., p. 34.

180. Brown, *FY 1979 Budget Report*, p. 91.

181. Ibid.; compare *The Military Balance 1986-1987*, p. 29.

182. Collins, op. cit., p. 142.

183. Weisner, Admiral Maurice F., "The U.S. Posture in Asia and the Pacific: The View From CINCPAC," *Strategic Review*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Summer 1978), p. 45.

184. Ullman, op. cit., p. 41.

185. Ibid., p. 40.

186. *The Military Balance 1986-1987*, p. 28.

187. Ibid., p. 29.

188. Ibid.

189. U.S. Congress, *SAC Hearings on FY 87 Defense Budget*, p. 79.

190. Ibid.

191. Collins, op. cit., p. 141.

192. Foley, Admiral S.R., Jr., "Strategic Factors in the Pacific," United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 111, No. 8 (August 1985), p. 35.

CHAPTER 4

Implications of the Maritime Strategy

4.1 Introduction

With the enunciation of the Maritime Strategy, and the concurrent expansion of the U.S. Navy, there have been criticisms of various aspects of the strategy, especially regarding operations in the Pacific. This chapter will analyse the arguments of a number of critics, among them John Mearscheimer, Jeffrey Record, and others cited below. Some critics have raised questions concerning the ability of the Navy to carry out the missions assigned to it by the Maritime Strategy. First, it is asserted that the Navy is incapable of executing the large number of missions assigned to it, despite the buildup to nearly 600 ships; the obligations of the U.S. are disproportionate to the level of forces it possesses. Second, the ability of the Navy to carry out specific missions set by the Maritime Strategy has been questioned, with particular concern for the vulnerability of aircraft carriers and submarines in the face of Soviet counterattacks, if the U.S. chose to attack Soviet naval forces, including SSBNs, close to their homeland. In addition to the issue of capability, these arguments call into question the credibility of U.S. threats to attack the Soviet Navy within the framework of the Maritime Strategy.

Other criticisms question the usefulness of the Navy's offensive sea control strategy and the value of the Maritime Strategy for deterrence. Critics claim that an offensive doctrine is unnecessary for ensuring the protection of Atlantic and Pacific SLOCs. Others claim that the Navy's assertion of the importance of the Pacific, and its strategy's threat of simultaneous naval conflict in the Far East and well as in Europe should deterrence fail, in fact contributes nothing to deterrence, specifically to the deterrence of conflict in Europe. The deterrent value of the Maritime Strategy hinges upon the credibility of the threats which it presents and whether it can increase doubts regarding the outcome of aggression and the potential cost of a conflict, thereby reducing the likelihood of a conflict erupting. With regard to operations in the Pacific, it is argued that the doctrine of 'horizontal escalation' draws U.S. resources away from the most vital area, Europe, while failing to tie down comparable Soviet resources and failing also to cause a shift in forces away from the Central Front in Europe. In addition, the argument considers it unlikely that the Soviets would be concerned with attacks against their 'periphery,' being content

in a war to win the battle for Europe and to subsequently deal with the threats to their Far Eastern territory.

One of the features of the Maritime Strategy of which some analysts have been particularly critical is the aspect which involves aggressive attacks against the Soviet fleet in its home waters, against its bases, and potentially against Soviet SSBNs. Critics contend that aggressive, forward operations are provocative, and could lead to Soviet preemption in a crisis or first-use of nuclear weapons at sea in a conflict in which Soviet forces were being defeated, or in which Soviet naval strategic assets were being destroyed. This concern is relevant in the Pacific theatre, due to the element of horizontal escalation in the Maritime Strategy which predicts operations in the North Pacific to secure leverage over the Soviets; critics contend that by forward operations in the Pacific, U.S. forces make the use of nuclear weapons more likely.

A final argument that has been made concerning U.S. offensive force posture in the Pacific is that it threatens to embroil other regional nations, especially Japan, in a war in which they have no interest and from which they could expect serious repercussions in the form of direct attacks against their territories. In this chapter, these criticisms of the Maritime Strategy will be analysed, with the goal of assessing the capability of the Navy to carry out its strategy, the value of the strategy for deterrence, the threat to escalation generated by the Maritime Strategy, and the effect of the strategy on Japan, the main U.S. ally in East Asia. Attempts will be made to consider each of the criticized aspects in the context of the strategy as a whole, and to consider the relevance of each criticism to naval operations in the Pacific.

4.2 Capabilities

Arguments that the U.S. Navy is not capable of carrying out the missions defined for it by the Maritime Strategy arise from perceptions that the Navy is spread too thin to accomplish its tasks, or that the Soviet forces opposing it in a given theatre are too great to permit the U.S. to succeed in its missions, or both. The implicit criticism becomes one regarding credibility; if the U.S. Navy threatens to carry out attacks of which it is not capable, then the deterrent value of such threats is severely diminished. This section attempts to assess the credibility of the warfighting posture enunciated in the Maritime Strategy.

4.2.1 Insufficient Means for the Declared Ends

A major focus of criticism of U.S. military strategy generally in recent years is that the commitments and responsibilities of the United States require a much larger outlay of military resources to meet them than is appropriated. Military analyst Jeffrey Record has argued that military strategy, and naval strategy in particular, fall far short of the point at which there is a rough equivalence of ends and means. He has stated that "whatever may be said about the declared goals of the strategy, the stark reality is that the U.S. does not posess, nor will it in the future, conventional forces sufficient to fulfill those goals."[193] Record supports his view by citing the "...huge disparity between extant and projected conventional force levels, on the one hand, and those believed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to be necessary to provide reasonable assurance of fulfilling the objectives of the 'worldwide war' strategy on the other." According to the JCS, for example, the Navy would require 24 carrier battle groups in 1989, rather than the planned 15.[194] The report of the JCS on U.S. Military Posture reflects the divergence of needs and means by declaring that "US forces are not available to defend simultaneously against every threat with equal strength."[195]

Yet the assertion of a gap between forces available and forces desired for a 'reasonable assurance' of success does not in and of itself answer the question of whether or not the United States is capable of carrying out its strategy with the forces it currently possesses. Despite the admitted inability to meet all contingencies with equal forces, the U.S. military is still charged mainly with the task of protecting U.S. vital interests. These have remained essentially the same over the past 15 years, codified militarily by alliance agreements with nations in Europe, the Pacific region, and elsewhere, and economically defined by the areas of major trade, Western Europe, the Persian Gulf region, and the Pacific Rim. The gap between defense resources and commitments has existed for some time; for example, despite the focus of the Carter Administration on the defense of Europe, it repeatedly stressed U.S. vital interests in the Pacific and particularly in the Middle East. The Carter Doctrine, which declared U.S. intentions to use any means available, including force, to prevent control of the Persian Gulf region by an outside force, was an exemplary case of the failure to meet ends with appropriate means.[196] What has been accomplished by the Reagan Administration has been to, at least in some measure, "...bring U.S. military power into closer alignment with U.S. military commitments abroad...."[197] Despite a gap between available and desired forces, it might still be possible for the U.S. to achieve the goals of its strategy.

The essential purpose of U.S. military strategy, and consequently of the Maritime Strategy, is to deter conflict. In the context of meeting U.S. military commitments, the Maritime Strategy attempts to define missions which achieve lower-level objectives while

erecting a framework for fighting a war with the Soviet Union if deterrence fails. The available forces may not reflect the ideal or recommended level for ensuring the achievement of strategic goals; nevertheless, the strategic goals are inescapably defined by U.S. vital interests. Current U.S. force levels may not assure success in a war; yet the successful U.S. military strategy is above all one whereby deterrence is preserved. Deterrence, the central goal, can be maintained even if the U.S. cannot be certain of victory in a war; what is required is a credible threat to wage a war, and a credible possibility that the war objectives might be met. What is required for deterrence is not the assurance of being able to prevail, but rather the perception by the enemy that he cannot prevail. A strategy which enhances the enemy's doubts regarding his chances in a war and which raises the costs of going to war enhances deterrence. This is the declared purpose of the Maritime Strategy; to what extent the Navy's strategy can achieve this will be considered in a later section.

4.2.2 Credibility

Two elements of the Navy's Maritime Strategy have been criticized for lacking capability, and therefore credibility. First, the idea of forward offensive attacks employing aircraft carriers is seen as potentially catastrophic, because of the vulnerability of the carriers, and unlikely therefore to achieve success. Likewise, Navy's mission to attack Soviet SSBNs has been labelled as not viable by analysts such as Mearscheimer and Tom Stefanick. Should the U.S. Navy be perceived by the Soviet Union as incapable of carrying out its strategy, deterrence of opportunistic Soviet initiatives could be weakened. Yet the arguments about U.S. naval incapacity are not altogether convincing: there is evidence which suggests that the U.S. Navy is in fact capable, or is at least perceived as being capable of carrying out even the missions detailed by the Maritime Strategy.

It is argued that forward offensive attacks by carrier battle groups are "...a recipe for the certain disablement or destruction of the very carrier battle groups for which [Lehman] has long and effectively lobbied. To venture U.S. carrier battle groups close enough to the Soviet Union to launch air strikes on the Soviet Navy's home ports is to venture into the jaws of defeat."[198] Admiral Stansfield Turner and Captain George Thibault have described the threats which a carrier battle group would have to face when sailing to attack Soviet homeland bases. According to them, surprise could not be maintained, and therefore Soviet forces could be put on alert; when the U.S. forces were within 1,600 miles of Soviet air bases, they would be within range of over 90 percent of Soviet bombers, and still 1,000 miles from where their own carrier aircraft would be in range of Soviet bases. Thus "...the carrier force would be subject to Soviet air

bombardment for nearly two days before it was close enough to strike Soviet bases."[199] U.S. carrier battle groups would also be under attack from submarines and surface ships with long-range missiles before reaching the point where its aircraft could attack Soviet bases or fleet elements still in their home waters; having arrived in the zone where they could carry out attacks, U.S. ships are particularly vulnerable. According to Turner and Thibault, "...the chance of losing part, if not all of [the carrier task force] would be high simply because the trends of technology give the attacker who employs the new stand-off weapons like Exocet a considerable advantage today."[200]

The pessimistic analyses of U.S. carrier capabilities for forward attack fail to consider the advantages which the U.S. Navy possesses in technology and particularly in alliances. Both of these factors would significantly enhance the U.S. ability to carry out forward attacks against the Soviet Union. The Soviets cannot be certain of their ability to defend against U.S. forces at the range described by the Turner and Thibault: not only carrier-based aircraft, but land-based U.S. and allied aircraft would be available to intercept Soviet bombers sent to attack the U.S. fleets. Even the most advanced Soviet fighter aircraft could only escort the bombers for about 800 nautical miles; Soviet *Backfire* bombers would have to approach to within 300 n.m. of the U.S. fleet to fire its *AS-4* air-to-surface missiles, well within the combat radius of all U.S. carrier based aircraft. Lacking guns and air-to-air missiles, the chances of a *Backfire* against U.S. fighter aircraft cannot be termed good.[201] In addition, the most direct routes from Soviet bases to an attacking U.S. fleet would pass through the airspace of U.S. allies in most cases (except in the case of bombers sent against a U.S. force in the Pacific north of Japan and south of the Aleutian Islands), providing the possibility for early warning and response by carrier-based aircraft or by interceptors based in allied countries. U.S. Air Force aircraft, such as the 36 *F-4* and 48 *F-16* fighters based in Korea and the 72 *F-15* fighters based at Okinawa, Japan, together with allied air forces, could contribute to intercepting Soviet naval aviation, and also contribute to operations in the Sea of Japan and its accesses.[202] A squadron of 27 *F-16* fighters has recently been deployed at Misawa Air Base in northern Japan, enhancing available U.S. airpower in the northern area of the Sea of Japan and also providing forces for possible operations against Soviet forces in the Okhotsk bastion.[203]

Technological innovations appear to favour U.S. Navy's chances of success in attack. Far from revealing the value to the attacker of missiles such as the Exocet, the Falklands War of 1982 proved the value of concerted and highly capable air defenses for naval forces; British forces caused dreadful attrition to Argentine air forces, shooting down over 90 planes. The principle elements of the fleet, the aircraft carriers, were capably protected from missiles by the use of countermeasures.[204] In this regard, the

U.S. Navy possesses significant capability to conduct anti-air, anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare.[205] Among the forces available to the Navy to fight off Soviet attacks prior to launching their own are frigates, destroyers and cruisers carrying Standard anti-aircraft missiles (capable of handling three contacts at once), and the *Ticonderoga* class cruisers which feature the AEGIS air defense system, making them "...the best air-defense ships in the navy-and, almost certainly, in any navy."[206] There are 16 AEGIS cruisers built or funded, meaning at least one for each carrier battle group. U.S. aircraft carriers are capable of projecting fighter and attack aircraft against Soviet targets from positions defended by their defensive air, surface, and subsurface forces, and even from behind the land barrier of Japan in the case of attacks against the Soviet Far East. With the available, highly capable defense systems, and favourable geographical and alliance support, the credibility of the contemplated U.S. attacks is assured, at least to the extent that the Soviet ability to ward off such attacks is uncertain in areas beyond its immediate home waters.

The capability for threatening attacks against Soviet SSBNs is more questionable; as discussed in the previous chapter, it is also a mission that, though described as a feature of current U.S. naval strategy, might not be executed during a conflict. While it is generally agreed that "...there is no doubt that American submarines have a qualitative edge over their Soviet counterparts,"[207] the numerical and geographic advantages lie with the Soviet Union in the defense of their SSBNs. First, U.S. SSNs are the vessels most likely to be employed to try and sink Soviet SSBNs, at least until (and if) U.S. control of the seas in the Soviet SSBN bastions is secured, which would involve a vigorous battle regardless of the outcome; Soviet attack submarines hold a significant quantitative advantage in both the Atlantic and the Pacific. Should the U.S. choose to execute an all-out pro-SSBN mission, approximately 30 U.S. SSNs would be available to attack as many of the over 40 Soviet SSBNs in the Atlantic as had put to sea, which would be defended by nearly 130 Soviet SSNs and SSs.[208] In a conflict, Soviet SSBNs attached to the Northern Fleet would probably head for the Arctic Ocean, where their chance of detection is smaller, leaving their SSNs and SSs to face attacking U.S. SSNs.[209] In the Pacific, about 40 U.S. SSNs would face a greater challenge: besides over 90 Soviet attack submarines, the approaches to the bastion in the Sea of Okhostk are more easily defensible.[210] Soviet forces, based on land, are present at all entrances into the bastion, in addition to surface and air ASW forces. The entrances to the Sea of Okhostk are also easily mined to prevent access by hostile forces.

Despite the Navy's present declaratory doctrine, even statements by supporters of the Maritime Strategy have implied a conservative evaluation of the U.S. capability to succesfully attack Soviet SSBNs. To defend the pro-SSBN mission against criticisms that

it threatens escalation stability, Captain Linton Brooks has argued that "the loss to conventional attack of one SSBN at a time over a period of days or weeks provides no single event sufficient to warrant the catastrophic decision to escalate to the strategic level."[211] The Navy obviously forsees such a mission as tremendously difficult, and numerical and geographical factors enhance this difficulty. Yet the qualitative advantage provides at least the capability to attempt this mission. Whether or not the mission can be successful, it is one which the Soviets clearly fear. Soviet naval doctrine has consistently placed a high priority on the defense of Soviet SSBNs; in the presence of a declared threat against the SSBNs (which was not present in U.S declaratory policy prior to formal codification of the Maritime Strategy), the concern for their naval strategic strike forces must increase. Confronted with U.S. SSNs of high capability, and the prospect of having to wage a defensive surface and air war for the control of its home seas concurrently with operations to defend their SSBNs, the Soviet Union's uncertainty over its prospects of success must increase. As a U.S. Admiral rather colloquially put it, "you have seen a 688 class submarine. It is a mean looking machine. They are paranoid about that big black submarine...Uncertainty is the the most dangerous element in the planners' book. It just drives them nuts. In submarine warfare, we bring uncertainty to the table like nothing else."[212] Such credibility as the U.S. possesses to threaten the destruction of Soviet SSBNs, though perhaps small, must increase Soviet planning uncertainties. Combined with a highly credible threat of attacks against Soviet naval forces in home waters and against Soviet bases, it significantly heightens Soviet concern for the defense of these areas, and hence also increases uncertainty over the propects for success in a naval conflict. Confronted by this uncertainty, Soviet planners are more likely to be deterred from contemplating any form of aggression that might precipitate a superpower conflict. Further implications of U.S. forward operations capabilities will be discussed in the following section.

4.3 The Utility of the Maritime Strategy

Among the criticisms of the Maritime Strategy, two in particular have focused upon the mission of offensive sea control and the declared contribution which the global, offensive strategy makes to deterrence. Offensive sea control has been condemned, not only as a strategy which places major U.S. fleet elements at risk, but also as one which is unnecessary for protecting sea lines of communication from Soviet attacks in a war. The deterrent value of the Navy's strategy has been doubted on the grounds that it is not credible (as discussed above), and also on the grounds that naval actions, even in the context of horizontal escalation against Soviet assets in the Pacific, do not contribute significantly to deterring conflict with the Soviet Union, particularly conflict in Europe.

4.3.1 The Necessity of Offensive Sea Control

Three major concerns have predicated the U.S. Navy's declaration of an offensive sea control strategy; all three have been attacked as unfounded. The Navy has claimed that, first, an offensive strategy would keep Soviet naval forces, particularly SSNs, tied up in their home waters, and therefore render them incapable of attacking U.S. and allied SLOCs; second, that offensive, rather than defensive, sea control is more efficient militarily; and third, that an offensive strategy is necessary for protecting the security and integrity of allies such as Norway, Turkey, and Japan.[213]

The primary argument against the goal of keeping Soviet forces tied up in their home waters, and of aggressively attempting to destroy them there, is that Soviet naval forces would remain in home waters to protect their SSBNs regardless of American decalaratory strategy. Emphasis is placed on the fact that "[Soviet] SSNs' primary mission is to protect SSBNs, *not* to attack NATO's SLOCs."[214] In the Atlantic, Soviet SSNs must remain in home waters "...because of the mere presence of American attack submarines in the area around the GIN [Greenland-Iceland-Norway] gap. They cannot risk leaving their SSBNs exposed to the formidable American SSN force."[215] A strategy of defensive sea control focused on destroying Soviet naval and naval aviation forces in the area of the GIN gap, it is argued, would still present a deterrent threat to the Soviets, while permitting the execution of an effective campaign of SLOC protection by the U.S. Navy in conjunction with allied navies. These arguments are made in the context of assertions that virtually every element of the Maritime Strategy is inappropriate.

The Pacific aspect of offensive sea control has been challenged primarily on the grounds that it is highly provocative and that it places Japanese territory at great risk. By "taking advantage of the fact that at any moment 70 to 75 percent of the Soviet Pacific Fleet is in home waters, the U.S. Pacific Fleet could, in the event of a crisis, trap the Soviet Pacific Fleet behind choke points that close off the Soviets' Far East bases."[216] However, "this strategy would seem to require preemptive action, since during a crisis the Soviets would certainly attempt to move their ships out of bases and ports early, before war actually began."[217] Because of the task of destroying Soviet bases, linked to offensive sea control in the Maritime Strategy, U.S. bases on Japanese territory "...are essential for coordinating offensive attacks against the Soviet Union."[218] The focus on attacking Soviet forces in their home waters, with logistical support from Japan has, according to critics, increased the likelihood of Soviet attacks against Japan.

Both arguments regarding offensive sea control in the Atlantic and the Pacific, are not totally convincing in the context of the overall aims of the Maritime Strategy. First of all, the Maritime Strategy, as enunciated by Admiral Watkins, recognizes the likelihood of mainly defensive, home-water missions by the Soviet Navy.[219] There seem

to be some potential advantages in the offensive operations evisaged by the Navy. U.S. declaratory strategy and aggressive U.S. forward movements encourage Soviet naval forces to retreat in preparation for complying with their primary missions. In the words of Rear Admiral William Pendley, the Director of the Strategy, Plans, and Policy Office of the CNO, "...early forward movements make it clear that the Soviets will not be able to accomplish their primary naval missions--defense of the homeland and protection of their SSBNs--by default. It also forecloses any single front advantage."[220] An offensive declaratory strategy accomplishes both the concentration of Soviet naval forces in their home waters, and also provides a means by which their security can be threatened. Should conflict occur, the retreat of Soviet naval forces into a defensive bastion lessens their ability to interdict SLOCs; were the U.S. Navy to adopt a relatively passive, defensive posture, more elements of the Soviet Navy would be free to attempt SLOC interdiction missions. Though a secondary mission, Soviet naval strategy places great value upon the destruction of enemy military, commercial, and military-support shipping in SLOCs. This is particularly true in the case of a protracted conflict. Should their primary mission be accomplished without loss or effort, Soviet naval strategy and fleet capabilities suggest that the Soviet Fleets would attempt to perform their secondary missions in support of the overall war effort.

Yet even before conflict begins, the forward offensive nature of the Maritime Strategy provides a means for securing deterrence without resorting to war. It is safe to assume that if the U.S. Navy were executing rapid forward movements and preparing for a conflict if deterrence could not be maintained, an extremely vital U.S. or allied interest would be in jeopardy, or at least perceived to be in jeopardy. Operations close to Soviet territory provide a means for the Navy to threaten Soviet vital interests, a point echoed repeatedly in Navy assertions that "this is where the Soviet fleet will be, and this is where we must be prepared to fight."[221] This threat may be capable of securing deterrence, by raising the potential cost to the Soviets of a slide into conflict. More defensively oriented sea control strategies generally eschew this potential means of attempting to prevent conflict by menacing the Soviet Navy and the Soviet homeland.

Should deterrence fail, the advantage of forward operations becomes the ability to control the location and extent of naval battles. It should be noted that forward movement in the context of attempting to maintain deterrence is always predicated upon the desire to maintain deterrence and at the same time increase preparation for the breakdown of deterrence; but aggression in the absence of war is specifically rejected. All attacks prescribed by the Maritime Strategy are stated to occur 'should war come.' The declared threat to Soviet naval forces by the U.S. Navy increases the number of forces that will be arrayed defensively in home waters. In a conflict, being deployed in a

forward position from which aggressive attacks may be launched would give the U.S. Navy the option of executing its strategy to the letter, and attempting to destroy Soviet naval forces, SSBNs and homeland bases, or, given that the strategy is intended to be flexible, to be content with having secured the protection of SLOCs and to continue to threaten the Soviet Navy with attacks, while maintaining a position of relative safety. It does not appear that details of U.S. naval strategy are 'set in stone;' therefore a shift away from declaratory strategy is not inconceivable, if U.S. and allied wartime objectives in other than naval theatres are being achieved.

Militarily, it would probably be advantageous to fight Soviet forces closer to their homeland than a strategy of defensive sea control would permit; a defensive strategy could conceivably result in attacks against U.S. allies such as Japan, Norway, and Turkey early in a conflict. While attempting to destroy the Soviet fleet in its home waters would be extremely challenging, it is clear that a decision to maintain a more defensive posture could result in additional Soviet fleet elements gaining access to the high seas and becoming a risk to U.S. and allied shipping and naval forces. By forcing them into defensive bastions before conflict begins, the U.S. Navy would be better able to ensure that they did not escape, if necessary, through the use of offensive attacks to destroy Soviet naval vessels. Also, Soviet naval strategy incorporates an element of power projection; in the event of a conflict, and in the absence of direct threats to their SSBNs or homeland, they would be quite likely to attempt this mission. Assaults on the territory of U.S. allies is likely, in an effort to secure safe passage to the high seas for the Soviet Navy.

The necessity of an offensive sea control posture is not absolute; yet certain results of such a strategy are appealing. First, the encouragement, through the declaratory strategy, of Soviet naval deployments closer to the homeland; second, the ability to better decide the location and nature of battles; third, the protection of SLOCs by keeping the Soviet fleet at bay; fourth, the only possible employment of the U.S. Navy for threatening vital Soviet assets, as a potential means of enhancing deterrence; and fifth, a better ability to protect U.S. allies which lie close to the Soviet Union or on the flanks of the NATO alliance. Some of these virtues of the Maritime Strategy are subject to considerations of relevance to deterrence and of possible escalatory consequences in a conflict.

4.3.2 Deterrence

The central goal of U.S. military strategy, and therfore of the Maritime Strategy, is to preserve deterrence. A major criticism of U.S. naval strategy is that it is not relevant to deterrence, particularly not to the deterrence of conflict in Europe, which is defined by many analysts as the most vital area of U.S. interests. According to Mearscheimer,

> ...the Maritime Strategy is fundamentally flawed, not only because it fails to enhance the deterrent posture in Europe, but also because it has meant spending large sums of money on the Navy that might have otherwise been spent on enhancing the fighting power of those forces that matter most for deterrence.[222]

He questions the value of potential U.S. naval operations in the Pacific, and the implicit doctrine of horizontal escalation which drives them. His argument is that, contrary to the assertion that the Soviet Union would have to shift forces away from Europe to meet a threat on their periphery,

> the Soviets could afford to absorb a temporary beating in the Far East while they were rolling up NATO's forces in Central Europe. A setback on the periphery would not weaken their European effort in any meaningful way and, moreover, once the Soviets had consolidated their position in Western Europe, they could move massive forces to deal with problems on their periphery.[223]

However, Mearscheimer fails to appreciate properly either the potential psychological and military value of horizontal escalation and disregards assertions he has made in in one of his earlier essays. In light of the increasing interest which the Soviets have shown in the Pacific, and the increasing value of U.S. interests in the region, the Maritime Strategy's threat of potential worldwide conflict in the event of a war may be one of its most useful aspects for promoting deterrence.

The main reason for threatening horizontal escaltion against the Soviet Union in the event of a war is to introduce potential costs and uncertainties into their planning, enhancing inhibitions toward considering aggression in any area, European or otherwise. This threat can be of value only under the circumstance that war might be prolonged; in the event of a short war in which the Soviet Union was quickly victorious in Europe, Mearscheimer is quite correct that horizontal escaltion could have no value. Yet he ignores the fact that both Soviet and U.S. military strategies, in recent years, have increasingly focused on the possibility that a war, if it comes, will be a prolonged conflict. As discussed in the first two chapters, both superpowers have appeared to base naval procurement decisions on this prospect, at least in part. And Mearscheimer himself has argued against the probability that the Soviets would ever be 'rolling up NATO's forces in Central Europe.' His conclusions on that point are based on a number of factors, including evidence that force ratios are not as severely tilted in favour of the Warsaw Pact as it might seem, the fact that the geography of the Central Front constrains the

number and size of possible invasion routes, and questions about the skills of the Soviets and their allies. His argument is quite strong, and he concludes that

> certainly, NATO does not have the capability to *win* a conventional war on the continent against the Soviets. NATO does have, however, the wherewithal to *deny* the Soviets a quick victory and then to turn the conflict into a lengthy war of attrition, where NATO's advantage in population and GNP would not bode well for the Soviets.[224]

In the context of an extended war, horizontal escalation becomes a more viable concept.

Given that the Soviets probably cannot achieve a quick victory in Europe, consideration must be given to ways in which deterrence in Europe might be strengthened so that aggression becomes even less attractive a prospect. The goal must be to decrease the prospects of rapid success, decrease the prospects of success altogether, and increase the potential costs that would be associated with aggression. NATO has modernized its LRTNFs over the past four years in an effort to do each of these. But despite a failure to upgrade conventional forces, the essential aspects of Mearscheimer's arguments continue to hold. Nonetheless, it is always possible that, because of a Soviet perception that the NATO nuclear deterrent is not credible, and that the balance of conventional forces may have shifted more in their favour, the attractiveness of invading Western Europe is increased. This is not to say that the Soviets would immediately, seriously consider it; rather, this indicates a manner in which deterrence is undermined. The Maritime Strategy's element of horizontal escalation provides a means by which the U.S. Navy, extant and useful for a variety of other missions in U.S. strategy, can also contribute to the potential costs of aggression in Europe and to the prevention of a rapid victory there, and consequently providing a means of enhancing deterrence.

In a war between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, there is a good chance that a prolonged war of attrition could develop; the strategy of attacking Soviet vital areas on their periphery provides a means of increasing the costs of starting a war and, potentially, of forcing resources away from the Central Front to deal with these other contingencies. Soviet interest in its Far Eastern Province has increased in recent years, and the area which now hosts the largest of the Soviet fleets must be considered vital to the USSR.[225] The credible threat of attacks against this region by the U.S. Navy must cause increased uncertainty for Soviet planners. In a prolonged war for Europe, the possibility of a loss in the Pacific theatre could be perceived as threatening to the Soviet Union, because a naval loss would increase the threat that the Soviet homeland could come under direct attack. This could make reinforcements to this theatre more likely; this prospect enhances effective deterrence.

Both psychological and military influences contribute the the value of opening a

second front in a protracted conflict, particularly against the Soviet Union. In both of the World Wars of this century, Russia was the protagonist in important moves regarding the development of a second front. In World War I, the Schlieffen Plan of imperial Germany failed in part because German forces had to be shifted away from the invasion of France to cope with the Russian army, which had mobilized faster than expected, on the Eastern Front. In the second World War, the Soviet Non-Aggression Pact permitted Nazi Germany to invade and overrun Western Europe; when Germany turned on its erstwhile ally, the USSR urged its allies to open a second front in the West as quickly as possible to relieve the pressure on it. In 1943 and 1944, the splitting of German forces between two and later three fronts helped contribute to their defeat. Thus the USSR should recognize from history the value of a two-front campaign in defeating an enemy (even more so because of the great value accorded by the Soviets to their 1945 campaign in Manchuria for the ultimate defeat of Japan), and be concerned about the prospects of facing such an attack themselves.[226]

Faced with a threat to what is now considered a vital region of the USSR, Soviet decisionmakers would be faced with increased uncertainty about the viability of going to war; in a war, actual attacks on this region by U.S. forces predeployed in the Pacific could cause the Soviets to shift more forces to the region to defend it, or at very worst 'fix' Soviet forces in Asia and prevent them from reinforcing the European front.[227] Analyst Colin Gray has best summarized the value of horizontal escalation, stating that

> if a campaign in Europe were to produce a stalemate, and if the Soviet Union would not agree to a prompt restoration of the *status quo ante*, the West would have little choice other than to seek to prosecute the war wherever it could with the prospect of securing substantial advantage. Soviet sea power would have to be pursued, with prudence, into its 'bastion' areas in order to stregthen Western control of the key SLOCs, while the 'long suit' of the alliance, naval power, inevitably would be employed to provide such pressure as it could to favor early war termination.[228]

By forcing the Soviets to consider a second threat, in the absence of assurance of swift victory in Europe, horizontal escalation could contribute to the termination of a war, but moreover to the deterrence of conflict in the first place.

4.4 The Potential for Escalation

A central concern for many critics of the Maritime Strategy is the issue of escalation. The main criticism is that by carrying out aggressive attacks on Soviet naval forces, and by threatening bases in the Soviet homeland and Soviet SSBNs with destruction, U.S. naval strategy makes it more likely that nuclear weapons would be used in a conflict. This could be the case, it is argued, either if U.S. forces succeed in their

attacks against the Soviet Navy, and leave the Soviets with a choice between defeat and resorting to nuclear weapons, or if the U.S. Navy manages to attack and destroy a portion of the Soviet SSBN fleet. Such an argument appeals to the logic that, by bringing U.S. and Soviet naval forces into large-scale combat close to the Soviet homeland, the chances of conflict intensifying are greater than if the two Navies were to engage in a more limited manner further from the Soviet coast. This section assesses the validity of the claims that this element of current U.S. naval strategy is actually 'dangerously destabilizing' and frought with 'escalatory potential.'

One analyst has asked rhetorically, "would not the side that started losing in a massive conventional conflict be sorely tempted to employ nuclear weapons? Is not this the essence of NATO's own doctrine of nuclear first use?"[229] Should U.S. forces successfully destroy major elements of the Soviet fleet, and be able to carry the fight into Soviet home waters, the U.S. fleet would enhance its position from which to threaten or carry out attacks against land targets in the USSR. However, it is argued that in this event, "...the Soviets would be able to use their nuclear weapons to blow through the U.S. forces stationed at Japanese choke points rather than accept humiliating defeat in their home waters."[230] According to this point of view, U.S. naval strategy risks hastening the use of nuclear weapons by seeking a naval victory in the conventional phase of a general conflict.

Closely related to this argument is the notion that, either by putting Soviet SSBNs at risk through offensive operations against other elements of the Soviet fleet, or by actually attacking Soviet SSBNs, the U.S. Maritime Strategy incorporates strategies which risk a devastating Soviet first-use of nuclear weapons. With regard to U.S. attacks against naval forces and bases, Barry Posen has argued that "if such attacks should threaten the survivability of Soviet ballistic missile submarines, as they might, how would the Soviet Union react? It could decide that a nearly-certain-to-succeed nuclear strike against those threatening carriers was both lucrative and necessary."[231] The Navy's declared intention to fight in the Pacific at the same time as in the Atlantic increases the risk of escalation; Posen argues that this creates "...still greater escalation pressures because the entire Soviet strategic submarine force would then be threatened."[232] Because of the declared intention in the Maritime Strategy to take direct action against Soviet SSBNs, it is argued that "...an offensive sea control strategy would result in the destruction of some portion of the Soviets' strategic retaliatory forces....the Soviets probably would not stand idly by while the strategic nuclear balance shifted against them."[233] Soviet responses could be a strategic strike against U.S. strategic forces to redress the balance, nuclear strikes against U.S. SSNs (perhaps with nuclear depth-bombs), or theatre nuclear attacks against U.S. surface vessels to introduce the threat of

nuclear escalation.[234] Critics also discount the possibility that either the offensive sea control strategy or direct attacks upon Soviet SSBNs could actually force the Soviets to agree to terminate a conflict.[235]

It is not clear how risky the missions of offensive attacks against Soviet land targets and SSBNs, proposed by the Maritime Strategy, actualy are; while the criticisms are valid to some extent, there are factors which are not taken into account by the critics which tend to limit the extent to which the Maritime Strategy can be considered 'dangerously' escalatory. Soviet strategy and force structure suggest that the USSR contemplates the possibility of fighting a prolonged conventional conflict, if necessary; combined with this is the probability that, in a conflict, Soviet forces would be deployed so as to decrease the chance that Soviet SSBNs suffer serious attrition, even if only conventional weapons are used. The concern with conventional operations is perhaps partly a product of the tactical nuclear capability of the U.S. Navy, and the threat of counter-escalation which it carries even during conventional operations; the resort to tactical nuclear strikes in a situation of mutual threat is less likely. Finally, the prospects for war termination through offensive operations appear better than most critics admit.

In this decade especially, Soviet military strategy has focused more on the possibility that Soviet forces might be required to fight a protracted conventional war. Naval strategy and force procurement have reflected this trend. Given these factors, and the probability that Soviet tactical nuclear weapons use at sea would only be authorized in the context of nuclear weapons use on land,[236] there appears to be some possibility that restraint in escalation would be shown by the Soviets in early stages of a conflict. According to one U.S. naval officer, "Soviet writings are quite clear that they will undertake attacks on nuclear-capable forces with conventional forces where they have the capability."[237] Besides this, the chance of serious threat to Soviet SSBNs early in a conflict is not great, thus lessening the possibility of escalation on this account. Soviet naval strategy contains an element of strategic defense, which includes conventional attacks against U.S. SSBNs, but which the Soviets have lacked the capability to carry out. This element of Soviet strategy is one reason for which the Soviets have always deemed U.S. attacks against Soviet SSBNs possible (by 'doctrinal mirror-imaging'),[238] and for which the Soviet Navy has prepared by developing a workable concept of defensible SSBN bastions since the late 1970s.[239]

In addition, increased chances of survivability for other legs of the Soviet strategic triad suggest that the Soviets could tolerate some attrition of SSBNs without responding by escalation.[240] Finally, even officers in the U.S. Navy are not sanguine about the chances of serious Soviet SSBN attrition through conventional attacks, a factor that would be reinforced by the probability that in the early stages of a conflict, U.S. forces

would not even be permitted to directly attack Soviet SSBNs, being rather confronted at barriers by Soviet SSNs and SSs. This would permit U.S. attacks against such forces while Soviet SSBNs sought to hide deep in the sea bastions, further decreasing the chance of SSBN attrition and allowing U.S. forces to forego the possible need to differentiate between Soviet attack and ballistic missile submarines, a factor which further inhibits the chance of escalation.[241]

As a conflict fought within the framework of the Maritime Strategy progressed, there would be at least one major disincentive to Soviet nuclear attacks on U.S. naval vessels. This is the threat of U.S. counter-escalation against Soviet homeland targets, and the concurrent threat that once nuclear war has been initiated at a naval tactical nuclear level, the possibility of an all-out nuclear war would be increased. The U.S. Navy carries a variety of nuclear weapons on board its surface ships and submarines, to a total of about 3500 tactical weapons available for use.[242] Although there is no stated U.S. doctrine for the use of these weapons,[243] the Soviet Union would have to be cautious about giving the U.S. incentives to use them. Nuclear attacks against U.S. vessels, at any stage of a conflict, are deterred by the presence of tactical nuclear weapons aboard U.S. ships; because some U.S. SSNs carry *Tomahawk* cruise missiles capable of carrying a nuclear warhead, even a large-scale nuclear attack against the U.S. surface fleet could not be certain of eliminating the threat of direct, tactical nuclear retaliation. Given the value which the U.S. places upon its Navy, the Soviets must recognize that "...attacks against U.S. vessels are likely to unleash emotional pressures for punitive strikes against higher-value targets in the attacker's homeland."[244] This prospect for limiting conflict to the conventional level because of the threat of unlimited escalation if nuclear weapons are introduced is echoed by analyst Michael MccGwire, who considers "...that the prospect of a Soviet nuclear response to the sinking of an SSBN is extremely remote, especially in view of the Soviet desire to keep conflict conventional as long as possible to avoid nuclear destruction of the Soviet homeland."[245] These potential sources of inhibition tend to indicate that nuclear weapons use, even by a force faced with conventional defeat, is not as likely as some critics of the Maritime Strategy assert.

The final factor which suggests that nuclear weapons might not be used, even in the event of U.S. Navy offensive forward operations, is that, in the event of a conflict remaining limited to conventional weapons, war termination could be possible on the grounds that neither side has an incentive to continue fighting. This argument is somewhat different than the one which underpins the Maritime Strategy's defense of its pro-SSBN operations, namely that the shift in the nuclear correlation of forces provides war termination leverage. In light of the discussion above, the ability of the U.S. to significantly alter the nuclear balance in this manner is uncertain. However, once

deterrence has broken down, an end to a conflict might be achieved through denying the Soviets Union the ability to prevail, by blunting a Soviet ground attack into Western Europe and by defeating Soviet naval forces, in two theatres if necessary. At the same time, the presence of countervailing and threatening nuclear forces on both sides limits the attractiveness of resorting to these weapons in a losing situation (this argument would also apply to NATO forces in Europe, unfortunate from a Western perspective). By the presence of nuclear weapons before conflict, and the possiblity of their use in escalating a conventional war, deterrence is enhanced;[246] in a conventional conflict, the threat to both sides in terms of destruction from nuclear weapons seems to enhance the chances of termination rather than escalation.

In a conventional superpower conflict in which the U.S. can demonstrate that the Soviets cannot prevail, and in which it can communicate the aim of restoring the status quo rather than any desire to eradicate the Soviet state or system, the chance of war termination without resort to nuclear weapons appears to be good.[247] The ability to clearly convey these aims to the Soviets, especially in a situation where the Soviet homeland stands to be directly threatened with attacks, is an issue that cannot be treated here; however, it is clear that the U.S. would have strong incentives to find the means to communicate its aims, both because of the lesson of overreaching goals taught by the Korean conflict and because of the continuing possibility of nuclear weapons use until the conflict is ended. The possibility of achieving war termination on terms favourable to the U.S. (but acceptable and not punitive to the Soviet Union), while limiting a superpower conflict to conventional weapons, does not appear as bleak as thought by some critics.

4.5 The Impact on Japan

The new emphasis in the Maritime Strategy upon forward offensive operations and the stress on the ability to carry out operations in two (or more) theatres simultaneously has had a variety of implications for U.S. allies and friends in the Pacific. This has been true particularly for Japan, which has been called "...the keystone of [the U.S.'] Pacific coalition."[248] Critics of U.S. naval strategy have argued that forward operations in the Pacific during a superpower conflict increase the chances of attacks on Japan. How valid is this criticism, and what benefits might accrue to Japan (and by extention, to other U.S. allies in the region) from the shift in U.S. strategy?

According to two critics, "...Japan has become partner to a provocative strategy over which the Japanese have no influence or control."[249] In this view,

> America's regional allies--particularly Japan--stand to lose a great deal from Washington's new offensive strategy. U.S. military facilities in Japan are so close to the Soviet coast that in a crisis they would be highly provocative to

> Moscow; thus they are likely to draw Japan immeditely into any superpower clash.[250]

Because of the presence of U.S. bases on Japanese soil, critics contend that the chance of a Soviet attack in the event of a superpower conflict is increased by the offensive thrust of new U.S. declaratory strategy. Andrew Mack has argued that

> since Japan, with its US air and naval bases, communications networks and supply dumps, plays such a crucial role in US strategy, it would automatically be involved in any horizontal escalation operations - operations which would very probably result in Soviet attacks against Japan and...pose very real risks of nuclear escalation.[251]

The primary concern of the critics is that Japan might find itself under attack in a war which "...might have little or nothing to do with Japanese interests."[252] The extent to which these criticisms are valid is not clear, especially in view of possible benefits to Japan (and other regional nations) that result from the increased focus of U.S. naval strategy on the Pacific theatre.

Two factors blunt the thrust of the arguments that U.S. strategy creates a threat to Japan. First, Japanese perceptions of threat and Japanese government security conceptions indicate that Japan would consider a more robust U.S. commitment to the preservation of deterrence in North East Asia a benefit to Japan. Second, Soviet strategy and geographical considerations in the Pacific suggest that Japan might be at risk from Soviet aggression regardless of U.S. declaratory strategy. Japan's primary security concern is the Soviet Union. According to analyst Yong-Ok Park, "Japan, like the United States, considers the Soviet threat as the most important....It also well recognizes the growing need for cooperation with the United States and South Korea mainly in order to secure the [SLOCs] around the Japanese islands and blockade the straits--including the Korea Strait--against Soviet advance into the Pacific."[253] In this context, the Japanese government is concerned with upgrading the U.S. commitment to Japan's defense, which is promised by the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Treaty of 1960, and with providing means for Japanese self-defense in cooperation with the U.S. forces. Since the beginning of the 1980s in particular, Japan has perceived an increased potential threat from the USSR because of the Soviet military buildup in the Far East;[254] in line with this perception, Japan has expressed views of defense objectives which seek to enhance deterrence of the Soviet Union. Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone outlined these objectives in 1983, stating that

> ...the whole Japanese archipelago or the Japanese islands should be like an unsinkable aircraft carrier putting up a tremendous bulwark of defence against the infiltration of the [Soviet] *Backfire* bomber. To prevent *Backfire* from penetrating should be our first goal. The second target objective should be to

> have complete and full control of the four straits that go through the Japanese islands so that there should be no passage of Soviet submarines or other naval activities. The third objective is to secure and maintain the ocean lines of communication.[255]

From this perspective, Japan's defense objectives are broadly in line with U.S. objectives in the Pacific, since "...the desirable way for Japan to avoid war is to possess the capability to make a Soviet attack in the Far East extremely costly."[256]

It is probably true that the likelihood of an attack on Japan is greatest in the context of a superpower conflict; however, it is debatable whether this is a product of a 'provocative' U.S. strategy into which Japan has been inserted (or has integrated itself), or whether this is a result of Soviet strategic interests in the Far East and necessities of Soviet strategy. The evidence suggests that this second explanation is at least as credible as the first. Many analysts consider that it is possible that Japan would come under attack in a war because of the need perceived by the Soviet Union to surge its naval forces out of the Sea of Japan in a conflict. Most scenarios of conflict in the Pacific assume that the superpowers have begun their war in another theatre, and that it has expanded to the Far East; current U.S. naval strategy considers that it could be useful to carry out operations in more than one theatre. But Soviet strategy in the Pacific could result in attacks on Japan, irrespective of U.S. strategy and actions. Paul Dibb asserts that one of the missions of Soviet Far Eastern military forces "...is to launch conventional attacks against China and against US and allied naval and air force in the northern and mid-Pacific...."[257] More specifically, Soviet naval missions including sea control, sea denial, and SLOC interdiction in the Pacific could hinge on control of the exits from its home waters, which pass primarily through straits overlooked by Japan. Soviet strategy incorporates an element of force projection, though its capabilities are modest; yet it has been noted that "a surge with only minimal addition of assets would give them the capability to...mount a small amphibious operation. Likely targets would be the La Perouse [Soya] Strait or perhaps one of the other choke points constraining the surface fleet."[258] Given the importance of the Japanese straits to the Soviet Pacific Fleet, the chances of an assault upon them in the context of a war are quite good, and it can be argued that Japan is therefore "...threatened not because of its military alliance but because of its geostrategic situation. It would be unreasonable not to expect a major power to attempt to seize a geostrategically important area before its opponent utilizes it, particularly if the country at issue were inadequately armed."[259]

The value for Japan of U.S. naval strategy as expressed in the Maritime Strategy is two-fold. First, the reemphasis on the vital nature of U.S. interests in the Pacific and the assumption of the need to fight a conflict in two theatres at once, if necessary, has been a

reassuring factor following moves in the 1970s to decrease U.S. commitments in Asia. Second, a U.S. strategy which has been redressed in an effort to enhance deterrence by maintaining an offensive capability in the Pacific region has been seen as dovetailing with Japanese efforts to enhance deterrence by improving defensive capabilities. In view of Japanese concern regarding possible Soviet threats, the attention given to the Pacific theatre in current U.S. naval strategy has helped to alleviate fears that the U.S. commitment to its allies in the Far East was weakening, at a time when the threat was growing. Since the early 1970s, "...doubts had been growing in the region about the willingness of the United States to maintain the balance of power."[260] U.S. naval strategy in the 1980s has contributed to relieving some of these doubts. U.S. officials have stressed the importance of the Pacific in terms of alliances, security treaties, and trading parters which the U.S. preserves in the region, and have promised both in declaratory strategy and through force increases to defend U.S. interests in the Pacific.[261] The increased credibility of the promise, if not the promise itself (which had been made by previous U.S. Administrations), seems to be the factor which has been most significant in the perceptions of U.S. allies. As a result, "questions about U.S. reliability as an ally, which arose when President Carter broke with Taiwan and proposed drastic cuts in Korea, have largely been laid to rest since 1980."[262]

The second value of the Maritime Strategy is the emphasis which it places upon operations in the Pacific to strengthen deterrence regionally and globally. Arguments that U.S. strategy is provocative, escalatory, irrelevant, or incredible seem to be overstated; there does appear to be at least some deterrent value in the declaratory strategy for the Pacific region. In this decade, Japanese defense policy, which stresses defensive operations, has come to be seen as useful means on providing a deterrent to the perceived threat from the Soviet Union, to which the offensive elements of U.S. naval strategy have been considered an appropriate and important complement. This appears to be one of the important implications of the Japanese 'defense objectives' outlined by Prime Minister Nakasone, which propose missions for the Japanese Self Defense Force (SDF) which could contribute to the U.S. deterrent posture in the region, and which would contribute to the U.S. ability to concentrate on offensive operations in the event of a conflict. In this manner, "...Japan's defence capabilities in surrounding waters and in the air space above them will complement the US sea control and projection forces in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean."[263] The combination of U.S. posture and increased Japanese defensive capabilities makes the potential costs to the Soviet Union of operations in a Pacific conflict greater, thereby enhancing deterrence of the perceived threat in Asia, and by doing so decreasing the attractiveness of conflict at any point around the world.

Both South Korea, as a U.S. ally, and China, as a nation of (at least) regional importance, are affected to some extent by the Pacific dimensions of the Maritime Strategy. However, the effects are not as significant as those on Japan, for a variety of reasons. Consideration of the factors (historical, political, and strategic) which affect the relationships between the U.S. and South Korea and between the U.S. and China are beyond the scope of this thesis. In the case of South Korea, the Maritime Strategy, with its emphasis on forward operations, has been one element which has "...reassured the Koreans of the viability of the U.S. defense commitment."[264] But the significance of changes in U.S. naval strategy is not as great for South Korea, which perceives the greatest threat from North Korea, a land power directly across its border. Therefore, U.S. robustness in ground forces and aircraft on the Korean Peninsula is of the greatest importance for South Korea, and maritime support from the U.S. would supplement the ground forces. United States relations with the People's Republic of China, and the relations within the U.S.-USSR-PRC triangle are complex enough to warrant several separate studies; it is only in the context of overall Sino-Soviet-American relations that the effect of a stronger, more potentially aggressive U.S. presence in the Pacific on China could be analysed.

4.6 Conclusions

This chapter has considered the validity of a number of criticisms which have been levelled at elements of the U.S. Maritime Strategy, and the implications of these criticisms for Pacific operations. Though it is difficult to analyze the value of a warfighting strategy which first and foremost seeks the preservation of deterrence as long as its primary function is secured, a number of points can be made in conclusion. First, the accuracy of many criticisms of the Maritime Strategy is suspect, to the extent that contrary evidence and counterarguments are not always considered in an adequate fashion. The result is that the force of conclusions which attack U.S. naval strategy is sometimes diminished. This is true particularly with regard to criticisms of the doctrine of horizontal escalation which is implicit in the Maritime Strategy, and of the increased focus in naval strategy upon operations in the Pacific theatre.

The U.S. Navy appears to possess the capability to at least threaten credibly the missions which are outlined in current naval strategy. In the absence of consensus on some aspects of the strategy, and an uncertainty about how declaratory strategy would translate into operational strategy, it is impossible to be certain what action the Navy would take, or how successfully the Navy could carry out attacks against Soviet forces in a war. Yet the presence of offensive strategic concepts in the declaratory policy, combined with the capability to at least credibly attempt the stated missions, has the

effect of raising the potential costs of a conflict to the Soviet Union, and thereby of enhancing deterrence. By assuming a posture that threatens to 'carry the fight to the enemy' in a war, the U.S. Navy would force the Soviet Union to concentrate its naval forces close to its homeland, in an effort to carry out its primary missions of defending SSBNs in their bastions and protecting the homeland. This decreases the likelihood that the Soviet fleet would have forces available to effectively pursue its secondary missions, including SLOC interdiction and power projection. Similarly, an offensive posture preserves for the U.S. the ability to decide where and how (or even if) to fight, and permits threats to Soviet homeland bases to be preserved, which could have utility for negotiating an end to a conflict. The threat of forward operations appears to have more value for deterrence than many critics are willing to concede.

Because the Navy's strategy has emphasized the need for a strong posture in the Pacific theatre, both to deter the Soviet Union in the region and from aggression in Europe, there have been important implications for the region regarding the utility of the strategy for actually achieving deterrence, and for enhancing the level of U.S. commitment to regional allies. The threat of possible attacks against the Soviet Far East has some deterrent value, because it has become a region of vital Soviet interest; indeed, it forms part of their homeland. In the unlikely event of a conflict, pressure from U.S. naval action against the Soviet Far East holds the promise of forcing the termination of the conflict, on terms favourable to the U.S. and its allies. This could happen only in the event of a protracted war; there is evidence to indicate that the prospects of war being protracted, and indeed remaining conventional if it occurs, are good.

Pressures exist on both the U.S. and Soviet sides against the early use of nuclear weapons in a conflict, primarily centered on the threat of counterescalation which both sides can bring to bear at both the tactical and strategic nuclear level. Finally, the explicit statement that operations in the Pacific theatre are envisioned as simultaneous to operations in other theatres in a conflict contributes to allaying the fears of U.S. allies in East Asia about the U.S. commitment to maintaining the balance of power in the region and to defending the U.S. allies. Japan, which has been considered by some critics as a likely target for Soviet attacks, due to U.S. strategy, appears likely to come under attack in a superpower conflict regardless of U.S. strategy, simply because of its strategic value to the Soviets for securing their major naval objectives. Forward offensive operations, threatened by the U.S. Navy, combined with an enhanced defensive capability from the Japanese, more effectively deter conflict in the North Pacific region.

Notes

193. Record, Jeffrey, "Jousting with Unreality," *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter 1983/84), p. 15.

194. Record, *Revising U.S. Military Strategy*, p. 45.

195. *United States Military Posture For FY 1987*, p. 9.

196. Record, *Revising U.S. Military Strategy*, pp. 37-38.

197. Ibid., p. 46.

198. Record, "Jousting with Unreality," p. 13.

199. Turner, Stansfield, and George Thibault, "Preparing for the Unexpected: The Need for a New Military Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Fall 1982), p. 126.

200. Ibid., p. 127.

201. These characteristics of Soviet and American fighters, bombers, and missiles are cited in Collins, op. cit., Annex A, pp. 187, 222, 227, and 229.

202. Collins, op. cit., p. 274.

203. Trumbull, Robert, "Vigorous modernization to meet Soviet threat," *Pacific Defence Reporter 1986 Annual Reference Edition*, Vol 12, Nos. 6/7 (December 1985/January 1986), p. 28.

204. Freedman, Lawrence, "The War of the Falkland Islands, 1982," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Fall 1982), pp. 205-206.

205. These characteristics of Naval surface vessels and armaments are cited in Collins, op. cit., Annex A, pp. 222, 226-247.

206. Meacham, James, "The United States Navy," *The Economist*, Vol. 229, No. 7442 (April 19-25, 1986), p. 63.

207. Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep,", p. 37.

208. Ibid.; see also Collins, op. cit., p. 265.

209. Stefanick, Tom, "Attacking the Soviet Sea Based Deterrent: Clever Feint or Foolhardy Maneuver?," *F.A.S. Public Interest Report*, Vol. 39, No. 6 (June-July 1986), p. 6.

210. Collins, op. cit., pp. 273, 141.

211. Brooks, op. cit., p. 79.

212. Admiral Kinnaird R. McKee before the Senate Subcommittee on Strategic and

Theater Nuclear Forces, Committee on Armed Services, May 4, 1984, cited in Stefanick, op. cit., p. 9.

213. Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep," p. 42.

214. Ibid.; emphasis his.

215. Ibid.

216. Arkin, William M., and David Chappell, "Raising the Stakes in the Pacific," *World Policy Journal*, Vol. II, No. 3 (Summer 1985), p. 485.

217. Ibid.

218. Ibid., p. 486.

219. Watkins, op. cit., p. 7.

220. Pendley, William, letter to the United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 111, No. 6 (June 1986), p. 86.

221. Watkins, op. cit., p. 9.

222. Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep," p. 56.

223. Ibid., p. 31.

224. Mearscheimer, John J., "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," *International Security*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Summer 1982), p. 4.

225. For a discussion, see Chapter 2, Section 5 above.

226. Mearscheimer describes the threat of a war with China as being among the disincentives for the Soviets in a war of attrition: "...because of the Sino-Soviet split, the Soviets must consider the possibility of a war on two fronts. Even if there was not an imminent threat of a war with China, a war of attrition in the West would threaten to weaken the Soviets to a point where they might think themselves vulnerable to a Chinese attack," in "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," p. 4n. To the prospect of a second, Chinese front, the U.S. Maritime Strategy adds the prospect of a third front.

227. Brooks, op. cit., p. 84; Joshua Epstein, though critical of the notion of horizontal escalation, admits that "...geographical escalation could, in principle, *induce* Soviet redeployments." See Epstein, Joshua M., "Horizontal Escalation: Sour Notes of a Recurrent Theme," *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter 1983/84), p. 23.

228. Gray, Colin S., "Maritime Strategy," United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 112, No. 2 (February 1986), p. 41.

229. Record, "Jousting with Unreality," p. 12.

230. Arkin and Chappell, op. cit., p. 491.

231. Posen, Barry, "Inadvertent Nuclear War?," *International Security*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Fall 1982), pp. 30-31.

232. Ibid., p. 50.

233. Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep," p. 41.

234. Ibid., p. 51.

235. Ibid.; see also the arguments cited above.

236. see Collins, op. cit., p. 83; Brooks, op. cit., p. 79; and Tritten, *Declaratory Policy for the Strategic Employment of the Soviet Navy*, p. 210.

237. Pendley, op. cit., p. 86.

238. Brooks, op. cit., p. 80.

239. The SS-N-8 SLBM, capable of reaching the U.S. from SSBNs based in Soviet home waters, was first deployed in the early 1970s; however, only with the advent of many SSBNs carrying the SS-N-18 SLBM in the late 1970s was the bastion concept viable.

240. Jacobsen, op. cit., p. 1435, and Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep," p. 52.

241. Mearscheimer, "A Strategic Misstep," p. 41.

242. Ball, op. cit., pp. 23-24.

243. Ibid., pp. 23-26.

244. Ibid., p. 9.

245. cited in O'Donnell, Major Hugh K., Jr., USMC, "Northern Flank Maritime Offensive," United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 111, No. 9 (September, 1985), p. 53.

246. Barry Posen states that "...conventional war should be portrayed as Schelling's 'threat that leaves something to chance'; conventional war rolls the nuclear dice. If the Soviets can be made to believe this, then deterrence is enhanced." Posen, op. cit., p. 52.

247. Brooks, p. 81 and p. 75n.

248. Doer, Captain Peter I., "Japan: Keeping the Balance?," United States Naval Institute *Proceedings*, Vol. 111, No. 8 (August 1985), p. 40.

249. Arkin and Chappell, op. cit., p. 488.

250. Ibid., pp. 492-493.

251. Mack, Andrew, "The Soviet-American Conflict in the Pacific," paper presented to the First Asia Pacific Roundtable on *Confidence Building and Conflict Reduction in the Pacific*, 10-11 January 1987, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, p. 27.

252. Arkin and Chappell, op. cit., p. 494.

253. Park, Yong-Ok, *Korean-Japanese-American Triangle: Problems and Prospects*, Rand Paper P-7138 (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1985), p. 23.

254. Mochizuki, Mike M., "Japan's Search for Strategy," *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter 1983-84), p. 170.

255. quoted in Tokinoya, Atsushi, *The Japan-US Alliance: A Japanese Perspective*, Adelphi Paper No. 212 (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1986), p. 5.

256. Mochizuki, op. cit., p. 171.

257. Dibb, Paul, *The Soviet Union as a Pacific Military Power*, Australian National University Strategic and Defense Studies Centre Working Paper No. 81 (Canberra: ANU SDSC, 1984), p. 6.

258. Tritten, Commander James John, *Soviet Naval Warfighting Capabilities*, Rand Paper No. P-6917 (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1983), pp. 12-13.

259. Okazaki, Hisahiro, "Japanese Security Policy: A Time for Strategy," *International Security*, Vol 7, No. 2 (Fall 1982), p. 191.

260. Pauker, Guy J., *Strategic Aspects of Asian-American Relations in the 1980s*, Rand Paper No. P-6578 (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1981), p. 4.

261. See Chapter 3, Section 4, above.

262. Collins, op. cit., p. 142.

263. Tokinoya, op. cit., p. 43.

264. Levin, Norman D., *The Strategic Environment in East Asia and U.S.-Korean Security Relations in the 1980s*, Rand Note No. N-1960-FF (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1983), p. 28.

CHAPTER 5
Conclusions

This decade has witnessed an increase in the level of military competition between the Soviet Union and the United States in the Pacific Ocean, along with an increase in the interests of both superpowers in the region. The Soviet Union has come to consider its Far Eastern Province more important, not least because, from its eastern shores, the USSR has access to the increasingly strong economies of the Pacific Rim and can claim the title of Pacific power. The Soviet Union has expressed an interest in improving its relations with regional nations, and at the same time has increased its naval and other military forces in the region. The U.S. has for a long time perceived the Pacific to be an area of interest, and this has become even more true in the past few years, as U.S. trade with Pacific nations has surpassed trade with Europe. The U.S. has also expressed concern over the Soviet military build up in the Far East. In the context of the increased interests of both superpowers in the Pacific, changes in the military force structures and strategies of the USSR and the U.S. have had important implications for the region. This thesis has attempted to place developments in the Pacific in the context of overall Soviet and U.S. military strategy, to examine the changes in strategy that have taken place in recent years, and to consider the ramifications of U.S. naval strategy in the Pacific Ocean in light of these factors.

Overall Soviet military strategy has undergone some alterations in recent years, which have had implications for the missions of the Soviet Navy and the forces the Navy deploys. Goals of military strategy have remained fairly consistent, with a continued emphasis on maintaining deterrence, and retaining the objective of victory should deterrence of the U.S. fail. However, doctrine regarding the type and intensity of potential conflict has undergone some changes. Soviet declaratory strategy since the late 1970s has revealed a greater appreciation of the potential for unrestricted escalation in a nuclear war, with the consequence that neither side could attain anything resembling 'victory.' Thus, while maintaining (and indeed expanding) their nuclear arsenal, the Soviets have sought more balanced capabilities, and have adjusted their military strategy to prepare for the possibility of a protracted war fought strictly with conventional weapons. This trend towards improved conventional capabilities has been especially

visible in the increased size and quality of the Navy, which seems now to possess adequate forces quantitatively and to a lesser extent qualitatively to potentially achieve some of its missions without resorting to tactical nuclear weapons.

Since the late 1970s, there has been a fairly significant increase in the level and quality of Soviet military forces in the Far East. This has been notable particularly in the Soviet Navy's Pacific Fleet, which has increased in size proportionately more than other Soviet fleets, and which has received a larger share of newer, more capable Soviet vessels. The enhanced capabilities of the Soviet Pacific Fleet reflect an effort throughout the Soviet Navy to close the qualitative gap between Western forces and Soviet forces. The result has been the development of a true 'blue-water' navy, able to contemplate not only more traditional Soviet naval missions such as strategic strike and homeland defense, but also more offensive missions and increased peacetime presence in support of Soviet interests. The Soviet Pacific Fleet has received some priority in the deployment of newer vessels, due to increasing Soviet interest in the region, the need for self-sufficiency for the relatively isolated Pacific Fleet, and the expansions of the naval missions that could be useful and possible to contemplate in the Pacific. Acquisition of basing rights at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam has allowed the Soviets to maintain a permanent presence in South East Asia. This has resulted in a greater Soviet ability to project forces into the Indian Ocean, the establishment of forward deployed forces to counter Chinese or U.S. actions in the region, a facility for conducting surveillance and intelligence-gathering operations, and enhanced prestige and ability to exert political influence in the region.

The Soviet Pacific Fleet, having grown in size and capability, continues to be deployed primarily for the mission of strategic strike, with SSBNs which could seek sanctuary in the strongly defended bastion of the Sea of Ohkotsk in the event of a conflict. Newer surface ships and submarines have enhanced the Soviet ability to conduct missions which include controlling the seas in their immediate vicinity, and to use naval forces and naval aviation to attempt sea-lane interdiction or power projection. SLOC interdiction could be important in an extended conflict, though it would be of less value in the Pacific than a comparable mission in the Atlantic theatre, as SLOCs are of most value in a conflict for sustaining ground forces which would be deployed on a larger scale in Europe. Also, Pacific SLOCs are harder to interdict because of the greater distances in the Pacific Ocean. Power projection, carried out in the form of amphibious assaults under air cover provided from the mainland, could be useful in securing the straits by which Soviet ships would have to pass to the open sea. As capability has grown, more attention has been paid to these secondary missions; Soviet ship basing at Cam Ranh Bay could conceivably enhance these missions even more. Yet the facilities in Vietnam have not been configured to substantially support these secondary missions, leading to a

conclusion that, although they could be attractive and useful for the Soviet Union to attempt under some circumstances, they have not increased significantly in prominence within Soviet naval strategy. More significantly, the increased size and firepower of the Soviet Pacific Fleet has permitted a more extensive, and potentially effective, peacetime presence mission. Though the priorities of the Soviet Navy have not changed substantially, its increased capability and potential for carrying out peacetime and secondary wartime missions have been a source of concern and perceived threat to the U.S. and its allies in the Pacific.

In the 1980s, the U.S. has carried out a military buildup and has also changed some of the elements of its military strategy; in the process, the U.S. Navy has undergone the most improvement and the most apparent shifts in strategy. U.S. military strategy now takes into account the possibility of fighting a war on more than one front, with the Navy playing a vital role in this capability. Military strategy has been focused for decades upon the principles of deterrence, forward defense, and alliance solidarity. In the 1970s, the trauma of the Vietnam war led to decreased defense spending and smaller force levels in the U.S.; at the same time, military strategy was retrenched to attempt to better bring the ends of strategy in line with the means available. U.S. declaratory strategy in that decade focused on the possibility of responding to one major and one minor contingency simultaneously; the naval strategy of the period provided for forces to swing from the Pacific to the Atlantic, or vice-versa, in a conflict. Despite reassertions of the importance of U.S. interest in the Pacific, and the continued promise to defend those interests, there was a perception that U.S. Administrations were stressing the defense of Europe in their military planning, to the detriment of other theatres. U.S. declaratory naval strategy also indicated more defensive and passive roles for the Navy, including SLOC convoy missions and point defense.

Declaratory strategy in the 1980s has gone to great lengths to redefine military strategy generally and the Navy's strategy in particular. The plan to respond to multiple contingencies simultaneously has become part of overall strategy, prompted in part by the recognition of the growing importance of the Pacific region for the United States, in part because of the perceived Soviet threat in the region, and in part because of a belief that increased attention to the Pacific could enhance deterrence and reassure U.S. allies in the region. U.S. planners considered that it could be useful in a conflict to escalate, not vertically, but horizontally against the Soviet Union, by opening a second front in the Pacific following aggression in Europe. This feature in particular has represented a shift away from earlier declaratory strategy; the means by which such horizontal escalation would be conducted, namely offensive, aggressive attacks by the U.S. Navy against the Soviet Fleet and potentially against the Soviet homeland, are also a significant break with earlier strategy.

At the operational level, a shift in strategy is less apparent, because the operational strategy of the U.S. Navy in the 1970s appears not to have been completely in agreement with declaratory policy. There is evidence which suggests that the Navy's strategy included offensive elements, and not merely the defensive roles emphasized by Administration officials; at the same time, it must be recognized that in a crisis or conflict, an Administration with declaratory views limiting the missions of the Navy would probably have constrained naval operations in practice. Also, the statements of a some Navy officers suggest that at least some of the less offensive declaratory strategy had been assumed at the operational level, a view particularly evident among officers who have welcomed the 'shift' in naval strategy. In the absence of readily available information on U.S. operational strategy, a certain conclusion is not possible; but it appears that the operations conceived in the declaratory strategy of the 1980s reflect a significant change from declaratory strategy of the 1970s, and to at least some extent operational strategy has changed as well.

U.S. Naval strategy since 1980 has gone through a variety of changes at the declaratory level; by early 1986, an authoritative statement of the major elements of the strategy was made by the Chief of Naval Operations.[265] U.S. Maritime Strategy, as enunciated in this document, reflected the concerns for multi-theatre operations and offensive operations in a conflict which had characterized the shift away from previous declaratory strategies. It also reasserted the importance for U.S. strategy generally of other missions of the Navy, including peacetime presence, crisis response, and power projection in conflicts not involving the superpowers. It declared that a mission of attacking Soviet SSBNs in a conflict would be part of offensive strategy, a view which has been and continues to be the subject of some debate.

U.S. officials, naval and civilian, have explicitly stated that the previous swing strategy was abandoned partly because it did not provide an adequate basis for protection of U.S. vital interests in the Pacific. In light of an increased Soviet military presence in the region, it was necessary to promise and plan for a more certain commitment to the security of U.S. regional allies. The Maritime Strategy has responded to these concerns by paying more attention to strategy considerations in the Pacific, and the Navy has also expanded and improved the Pacific Fleets. Current U.S. naval strategy declares the intention to fight in forward areas in support of U.S. allies located in those areas, including Japan and South Korea, and the offensive operations in the Pacific are envisioned as contributing to deterrence of the Soviet Union generally.

The Navy has come under criticism for its new declaratory strategy; however, it appears that many of the criticisms are not entirely valid, and that there are in fact benefits to be derived from the Maritime Strategy. Despite a continuing gap between

ends and means of military strategy, it seems that deterrence, the major goal of U.S. strategy, can be sustained even with less than ideal force levels. The shift from a swing strategy to one of horizontal escalation, the emphasis in current strategy on offensive rather than defensive missions for the Navy, and quantitative and qualitative force improvements have enhanced the U.S. deterrent posture. Despite improvements in Soviet forces, the U.S. generally maintains a qualitative advantage in most aspects of military power, especially naval power, and enough, apparently, to credibly threaten to carry out U.S. naval missions. Support from U.S. allies also improves the credibility of threatened U.S. naval operations.

The mission which has received the most attention, attacks against Soviet SSBNs, is the one which is least likely to succeed, given Soviet attention to defense of their SSBNs within sanctuaries; in light of this, and the continuing debate within the Navy regarding pro-SSBN attacks, it is also the element of the Maritime Strategy least likely to be executed. Particularly in the Sea of Ohkotsk, the U.S. Navy would find this mission difficult. There is a possibility that this mission, still a subject of debate in naval circles, might not be undertaken. This possibility, together with the existence of countervailing nuclear capabilities in both the U.S. and Soviet navies at a tactical level, and increased emphasis in both U.S. and Soviet strategy and force structures upon conventional contingencies, makes it less likely that Soviet nuclear escalation in response to offensive U.S. naval attacks would occur. There would probably be less of a threat to Soviet SSBNs in a conflict than some critics assert, and possible U.S. tactical nuclear attacks against Soviet homeland bases in retaliation for nuclear strikes on U.S. vessels provide an apparent disincentive to initiating a nuclear exchange. It seems that criticisms of the pro-SSBN mission are somewhat overstated, particularly in their assertions that counterforce coercion is the primary element of the Maritime Strategy. While valid to some extent, assertions that the mission is potentially dangerous generally do not recognize that attacks against Soviet SSBNs are only one option in U.S. naval strategy, and that potential drawbacks of this mission do not necessarily discredit the overall strategy.

Pacific missions of the U.S. Navy are important for the purpose of enhancing deterrence, reassuring regional allies, and providing a means for allied defense in a conflict. In an extended conflict begun in Europe, naval pressure in East Asia could be one possible means of forcing war termination and a return to the status quo. The threatened employment of naval forces in a 'second front' attack adds uncertainties to Soviet planning, and increases the potential costs involved in aggression against U.S. allies. Because of increased Soviet interest in their eastern homeland, the chances that the Soviets would be seriously concerned about attacks or threatened attacks against their Far Eastern Province or even against naval forces in the waters adjacent to it have

increased. Thus the possibility of U.S. naval forward operations in the Pacific appears to improve the U.S.' deterrent posture. The stress on forward operations has also served to reassure U.S. allies in East Asia of the U.S. commitment to their defense, following some uncertainties during the 1970s. In contrast to criticisms that U.S. Maritime Strategy is provocative and could result in attacks against Japan, it seems that U.S. strategy as currently defined provides a more effective means of fulfilling U.S. commitments to Japan. The issue of the Maritime Strategy's effect on crisis stability is beyond the scope of this thesis, and therefore the question of whether the Maritime Strategy is provocative or not cannot be answered; however, Soviet naval strategy, force capability, and strategic interests suggest that attacks on Japan, in the context of a superpower conflict, would be likely regardless of U.S. naval strategy.

The United States has vital interests worldwide; an upgraded navy with a well-defined strategy can be useful for the military protection of those interests against threats or within the context of alliance commitments. In this decade, the U.S. has put forward a new naval declaratory strategy intended to enhance its ability to protect its global interests. Because of increasingly imporatant U.S. trade and alliance relationships in the Pacific, as well as a larger Soviet naval presence in the region, the U.S. Navy's Maritime Strategy has incorporated specific elements designed to allow a more active and capable response to Pacific contingencies. Many elements of the Maritime Strategy have proved controversial, with analysts declaring the strategy to be irrelevant, unnecessary, not credible, or dangerously escalatory. Most of these criticisms appear to be poorly founded, and this thesis has attempted to analyze and, where possible, refute them. Instead, the Maritime Strategy provides a useful framework within which the U.S. Navy can support U.S. interests through peacetime missions and in lower-intensity conflicts, as well as enhancing deterrence of the Soviet Union by establishing the broad elements of a warfighting strategy. Naval operations in the Pacific, stressed in the Maritime Strategy, provide a means of securing deterrence in the region, protecting U.S. interests and allies, and of deterring the Soviet Union on a global scale.

Notes

265. Watkins, op. cit.

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